Israel sends reserve units to Gaza front

GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP—ISRAELI WARplanes pounded the homes of Hamas leaders and ground troops edged closer to the Gaza Strip's densely populated urban center on Monday ahead of a key decision on whether to escalate its devastating two-week offensive.

From downtown Gaza City, black smoke could be seen rising over the eastern suburbs, where the two sides skirmished throughout the night.

At least six Palestinians were killed in

ISRAEL / A1

SPORTS / A12

Pacquiao wants at least 60-percent purse share in Hatton fight

METRO / A15

Man killed in failed bid to save son from burning house

ACROSS / A11

Palafox slams 'environmental corruption'

BUSINESS / B1

PDIC prepares to bid out 67% of PBCom

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, January 13, 2009 ★ 5 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 36 P18 www.inquirer.net

DepEd includes chess in school curriculum

By Philip C. Tubeza

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI LAPUS isn't looking for a chess genius like Bobby Fischer but he knows the wonders that the game offers.

Saying studies have shown that children exposed to chess learn faster and

DEPED / A6

5 DOJ officials take leave

Gonzalez, Zuño say PDEA execs must also go on furlough

By Norman Bordadora

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL Gonzalez yesterday placed two ranking department officials and three prosecutors on indefinite leave to comply with President Macapagal-Arroyo's order that those involved in the "Alabang Boys" controversy go on leave.

Justice Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor, Chief Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, Senior State Prosecutor Phillip Kimpo, State Prosecutor Miguel Ladaga and Investigating Prosecutor John Resado were considered on indefinite leave starting yesterday.

Gonzalez said Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Severino Gana would take on Zuño's tasks while the pending cases of the prosecutors on leave would be raffled off to other prosecutors in the department.

Zuño upheld the resolution dismissing the drug charges against the "Alabang Boys"—Richard Brodett, Jorge

DOJ OFFICIALS / A4

ASSISTANT Chief State Prosecutor Richard Fadullon (left) leads the press conference on the joint statement of concern by the National Prosecutors League of the Philippines and the Chief Prosecutors Association Inc. at the Department of Justice. Beside Fadullon are Muntinlupa Chief Prosecutor Edward Tagaran (center) and Davao State Prosecutor Antonio Arellano (right). CRISLOON

CHIEF State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño leaves the Department of Justice after a closed-door meeting with city, regional and provincial prosecutors. CRISLOON

SGT. Derrick Brooks salutes as he stands in for President-elect Barack Obama during Sunday's rehearsal for the Jan. 20 inaugural ceremonies. AP, FILE

Not an exact match but sarge feels great

WASHINGTON—SOMEONE WHO looked a little bit like Barack Obama was sworn in as the nation's 44th president at the US Capitol at the crack of dawn on Sunday.

The tall African-American male delivered a brief inaugural address and then headlined an inaugural parade that ended at his new home—the White House.

It was not Barack Obama. It was a stand-in—Staff Sgt. Derrick Brooks of the Army—who played the incoming president in an inaugural drama rehearsal that took over large areas

NOT HIS EXACT / A6

Ex-solon denies Palace links in Limkaichong case

By Christine V. Esguerra, Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FORMER REP. JACINTO PARAS YESterday disowned himself from Malacañang amid allegations that it was behind his petition in the Supreme Court, a move purportedly intended to oust Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

Paras said he had not talked to President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband or anybody connected to them about his petition seeking to disqualify Negros Oriental Rep. Jocelyn Limkaichong, as alleged by an Inquirer source from legal circles.

"That is a sham!" Paras told the Inquirer, referring to allegations that the First Couple had been in touch with him to convince him that Puno's inaction on the disqualification of Limkaichong (who defeated Paras' wife Olivia in 2007) was sufficient grounds to impeach the Chief Justice.

He said he was not close to the President. "I haven't seen the shadow or heard the voice of the First Gentleman for so long. I don't even know how he looks like now," Paras said.

He insisted that the petition he filed in the high court was a "personal" battle for him and his wife, who were both seeking to unseat Limkaichong over questions of citizenship.

Paras maintained that the issue was solely about Puno's purported failure to act on a draft decision against Limkaichong.

He said the decision penned by Associate Justice Ruben Reyes was signed by 14 other justices and should have been adopted.

"Our case should be shielded from politics, too," Paras said, borrowing a line from Puno who appealed to politicians to spare the high court from partisan maneuverings.

Paras said there was "no logic" to the allegation that his petition was

EX-SOLON / A6

Bicolano WW II veteran fights another kind of war

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PARACALE, CAMARINES NORTE—Zenaida V. Lumadrid escaped from Batanes where it fell on Japanese forces on April 6, 1942, during World War II.

He walked for almost a month to Bicol and joined the resistance forces until Liberation in 1945.

Today Lumadrid is fighting another kind of war—a policy of Land Bank of the Philippines that he finds stringent and impractical as age slowly catches up on him.

The 92-year-old is no longer in good health. He has difficulty walking around in his house. Going to the Landbank branch in Labo 22 kilometers from his village to collect his monthly pension of P5,800 is commonly difficult for him.

Like some 401 surviving World War II veterans in Camarines Norte, Lumadrid receives his pension from the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) credited to Landbank.

Since he could barely walk, Lumadrid executed a special power of attorney (SPA) on Aug. 13, 2008, in favor of his wife Mercedes, 83, to transact

BICOLANO / A6

TINA Fey accepts the award for best television series (comedy) for "30 Rock" onstage during the 66th Annual Golden Globe Awards. AFP/VOA

TWIN WINS Kate Winslet poses with awards for best actress for "Revolutionary Road" and supporting actress for "The Reader" backstage at Sunday's ceremonies in Beverly Hills, California. AP

Winslet, Fey shine at Golden Globes

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA—Kate Winslet won two awards all on her own—best dramatic actress for "Revolutionary Road" and supporting actress for "The Reader"—at Sunday's Golden Globes.

Tina Fey, the "30 Rock" star and creator, was named best actress in a TV comedy and her NBC series was picked as best comedy by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, capping a run of honors for the series and general acclaim for her Sarah Palin impersonation.

"The Wrestler" also won two awards

WINSLET / A6

Golden Globe Awards

Winners in key categories in the 66th Golden Globes

Best picture - drama
"Slumdog Millionaire"

Best director
Danny Boyle
"Slumdog Millionaire"

Best picture - comedy/musical
Vicky Cristina Barcelona

Best actor - drama
Mickey Rourke
"The Wrestler"

Best actress - drama
Kate Winslet
"Revolutionary Road"

Best actor - comedy/musical
Colin Farrell
"In Bruges"

Best actress - comedy/musical
Sally Hawkins
"Happy-Go-Lucky"

Best supporting actor
Heath Ledger
"The Dark Knight"

Best supporting actress
Kate Winslet
"The Reader"

Best foreign language film
"Waltz with Bashir"
(Israel)

AFP

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: The eastern section of Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with light rain. Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rains. Metro Manila: Partly cloudy; light to moderate winds from the southwest; Baguio: Partly cloudy; Tuguegarao: Cloudy with rains; Legaspi: Partly cloudy; Iloilo: Partly cloudy; Cebu: Partly cloudy; Tacloban: Cloudy with rains; Zamboanga: Partly cloudy; Davao: Partly cloudy; Cagayan de Oro: Partly cloudy; Iligan: Partly cloudy; Koronadal: Partly cloudy; Cotabato: Cloudy with rains; Surigao: Cloudy with rains; Butuan: Cloudy with rains; Source: PAGASA

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Second FRONTPAGE

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EZ2 (Results of January 12 draw): 05 31 10 02

SUERTRES (2D draw): 5 0 2

(2D draw results unofficial) FOUR DIGIT: 1 4 2 6

(3D draw): 4 5 9

(4D draw): 4 6 1

MEGALOTTO 6/45: 2 5 13 34 38 43

P10,236,648.60

Failure to spread wealth hinders RP–World Bank

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE WORLD BANK SAID THE PHILIPPINES' poverty reduction program was hampered by the failure to spread the benefits of economic growth from rich cities to poorer parts of the country.

In its 2000 World Development Report, the bank urged Philippine officials to correct the situation through the appropriate policies and more equitable public investments.

The bank said that in the Philippines and other middle income countries, economic development was highly concentrated in a few urban areas.

Indermit Gill, director of the World Development Report and World Bank's chief economist for Europe and Central Asia, said growth in the Philippines was highly concentrated in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, and a few cities like Cebu, Davao and Cagayan de Oro. Many provinces in the Visayas and Mindanao significantly lagged behind, he said.

Still said the disparity in the quality of social services and infrastructure between advanced and middle-income countries like the Philippines was blatant.

If only the rural areas enjoyed the same quality of services and infrastructure that cities were had, then investments could be spread out, the report said.

"Economic activities will remain concentrated in a few cities, but policymakers could ensure the convergence of living standards across the country through carefully designed policy and public investments in social services like health, education, housing and social protection in both urban and rural areas," said Gill.

The World Bank economist, however, said the government should not discourage the entry of investments in urban areas and should in fact facilitate them. But he stressed that poorer provinces should be made equally attractive for investors via increased spending in education, social services and infrastructure.

Bert Hofman, World Bank country director for the Philippines, said in a press conference yesterday one way to achieve "economic integration" was for the national government to revise the way internal revenue allotments to local government units (LGUs) are determined.

Currently, 40 percent of the national government's internal revenue collections are allocated to LGUs. Of the amount, 23 percent goes to provinces, 34 percent to municipalities, 23 percent to cities, and 20 percent to barangays. Details of the sharing among local governments belonging in the same category say municipalities, are based on population size and land area. The bigger the population and land area, the bigger the IRA from the national government.

Observers said one problem with this system of computing the IRA was that the population was highly concentrated in fifth cities, and so these got a bigger share of the national government revenues.

The World Bank said the Local Government Code should be amended to have the IRA computed based on actual need, not on population size.

"Poorer areas should be given more, and richer cities should have less IRA, if not none at all," Hofman said.

Survey says more than half of families rate selves as poor

MORE THAN HALF OF FILIPINO families considered themselves poor, while four in ten said they were "food poor" in the last quarter of 2008, a Social Weather Stations survey showed.

The survey also found indications living standards had gone down among poor families.

Of the household heads interviewed between Nov. 28 and Dec. 1 last year, 52 percent, or about 9.6 million families, considered themselves poor, 24 percent said they were not poor, and 24 percent put themselves on the borderline.

The latest self-rated poverty rate was about the same as the one recorded in September, but higher than its 2008 average of 51 percent "poor."

The figure is slightly higher than the 2007 average of 50 percent.

In terms of self-rated food poverty, the survey showed an increase of four points from its previous (September to 42 percent (about 7.7 million families) in the last quarter. Some 28 percent of the respondents said they were not food poor, while 30 percent put themselves on the borderline.

The 2008 average for self-rated food poverty was 42 percent, four points higher than the 2007 average.

Mindanao had the sharpest increase in self-rated food poverty. From a record-low 31 percent in September to 51 percent in the last quarter. Self-rated food poverty also rose in the Visayas (from 44 to 50 percent), and Metro Manila (from 43 to 52 percent), but stayed in the rest of Luzon (from 38 to 35 percent).

Self-rated poverty also increased in the rest of Luzon, from 31 to 44 percent. It increased to Metro Manila (from 43 to 53 percent) and Mindanao (from 52 to 59 percent), but did not change much in the Visayas (from 39 to 40 percent).

SWS noted that despite high inflation, the monthly amount poor households said they needed to be considered not poor and not food poor—the self-rated poverty thresholds—had been sluggish for several years. SWS said this was a sign of belt-tightening. Cyril L. Bonoboro, Inquirer Research

Gov't to search for poorest of the poor

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL Welfare and Development (DSWD) is set to conduct a nationwide household assessment to identify the country's poorest of the poor.

In a statement, DSWD Secretary Esperanza Cabral said the assessment would guide the department in its implementation this year of the P5-billion National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTSPR).

Cabral said the program's "main objective is to identify who and where are the poorest families in the country."

The targeting system is expected to make the government's anti-poverty programs "more effective" and ensure the proper distribution of welfare funds.

"This system will make it easier to determine which households qualify for a certain type of assistance from the government," Cabral said.

The P5-billion NHTSPR fund will come from the DSWD's proposed P53.09-billion budget for this year, which the Department of Budget and Management has approved as part of the P1.4-trillion national budget for 2009.

According to the DSWD statement, the national household assessment program would be conducted in three phases, beginning with the evaluation of all the municipalities and cities in the 20 poorest provinces, as well as in all the towns and cities whose the poverty incidence is above 60 percent. Akiko Otton

Infra projects should create more jobs, GMA tells DPWH

By Jimmon Magallanes
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO directed Department of Public Works and Highways officials yesterday to make all infrastructure projects "labor-intensive" to more people could be employed.

Cebu Rep. Benhur Salimbangon (4th district) said the President had issued the instruction to Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane during the inspection of the Cebu-Cordova-Mactan expressway projects in his congressional district.

Local residents are expected to benefit from the construction of the second phase of the P4.9-billion Antonio de Pio Highway in San Remigio and the P.836-million 4-km Tangke-Carmen road project in Medellin town.

Both projects will be started in the first quarter, Salimbangon said.

The President also checked on the newly completed dredging of the Hagnaya channel, a P46-million project at the Hagnaya port in San Remigio.

She also conducted an aerial inspection of the first phase of the Antonio de Pio Highway project, which is worth P4.9 billion, as well as two ongoing bridge projects in the same area that cost a total of $3 million.

The President, accompanied by Ebdane and Presidential Management Staff (PMS) chief Gerge Remonde, then proceeded to the Provincial Capitol of Tabuelan, Cebu to shuttle for lunch and to meet with Cebu officials led by Gov. Gwen Garcia.

Salimbangon said the mayors of his district handed the President several resolutions seeking funds for infrastructure projects such as school buildings and embankments in their towns.

The President arrived in Cebu Sunday afternoon and attended a Mass at Basilica del Santo Niño at 5:30 p.m.

BSP nets P3.7B

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas posted a net income of P3.66 billion in the first three quarters of 2008, reversing its net loss of P589.93 billion in the same period the previous year.

Total revenues of the 4SE composed of interest s charges on borrowings by banks, miscellaneous income, among others, reached P84,507.16 billion. On the other hand, expenditures amounted to P80,831 billion, resulting to income before taxes and foreign exchange gains/losses of P3,660 billion.

For the third quarter alone, the BSP registered a net income of P11.27 billion, more than four times the P2.6 billion earned during the same period in 2007.

The BSP said in its financial report released yesterday its income in the first three quarters of 2008 resulted from gains in foreign exchange transactions.

The peso's sharp appreciation in 2007 was reversed in 2008, partly the reason for the BSP's financial turnaround. Michelle F. Remo

Quiet holiday for Pacquiaos

BOXING CHAMPION MANNY Pacquiao arrived in Manila at 3 a.m. yesterday from Los Angeles to spend his family upon the holidays.

Pacquiao was with three of his children—Jinkiard, Michael and Princess.

Pacquiao said his wife Jinkee stayed behind after doctor warned their new baby's appearance would be imminent during the flight.

"The doctor told us to wait 10 days so that her eardrums would be more developed. They will arrive maybe on the 18th," he said.

Queen Elizabeth was born on Dec. 31 in L.A.

Later in the morning, the Pacquiaos boarded a plane for their native General Santos City.

In a brief interview with reporters, Pacquiao said his family spent a "quiet Christmas" in the United States, adding that they missed the Philippine-style of celebration.

The 2008 season for self-rated food poverty was 42 percent, four points higher than the 2007 average.

Mindanao had the sharpest increase in self-rated food poverty. From a record-low 31 percent in the last quarter. Self-rated food poverty also rose in the Visayas (from 44 to 50 percent), and Metro Manila (from 43 to 52 percent), but stayed in the rest of Luzon (from 38 to 35 percent).

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Third death penalty bill filed

THE MOVE TO reimpose the death penalty gathered more steam in Congress after another measure was filed one more bill restoring capital punishment in the wake of increasing heinous crimes in the country.

The latest measure, House Bill 3734, was filed by Mandaluyong Rep. Benasen Stallen Ilanos yesterday in response to the mounting drug crisis highlighted by the case of the "Alabang Boys."

Senate Majority Floor Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri had filed a similar bill in the upper chamber.

Earlier, Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante filed HB 3002 seeking the death penalty in cruelest in the killing of bloody bank robberies a few months ago.

Ilanos said the Constitution did not abolish the death penalty but it gave Congress the discretion to impose capital punishment for compelling reasons involving heinous crimes.

Ilanos's bill would impose the death penalty if committed by [illegible] or the Comprehen-

De la Paz to appeal expulsion

SUPREME COURT Associate Justice Jose Portugal Perez said he would appeal his expulsion "to a matter of principle."

"We no longer see it in the Rizal we play where he got married," said De la Paz, referring to his 14-year-old son who was also involved in the golf course brawl with the sons of Agriculture Secretary Senator Pangan's dismissal on Dec. 26.

De la Paz said his family's immediate concern was whether or not Blanc, a member of the Philippine junior golf team, could continue the tenure of the incident and continue to play golf.

The De la Paz lawyer, Raymund Narag, said he would write a letter of reconsideration to the Valley Golf board's only to reconsider of principle.

"The [board's] decision is based on erroneous findings of fact and, if at all, the penalty is too harsh considering the De la Paz family suffered greater injury," Perez said.

Both camps have expressed willingness to settle their quarrel out of court after each filed a criminal case against the other.

But neither side wants to make the first move.

Mayor Nestor Pimentel has filed a libel suit against the De la Paz daughter, Ramirez, over the disparaging blog she wrote against the Pimentel-Ramirez. He filed it in Mesa, Lenore did Jan. the town he presides over.

Erika Sauler

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Iloilo gov withdraws subsidy for prosecutors

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—GOV. NEL TUPAS Jr. has ordered the withdrawal of the province's subsidy to provincial prosecutors, accusing them of unjustly dismissing cases against suspected drug peddlers.

In a letter dated Jan. 9, 2009, provincial administrator Manuel Mejaredas informed Provincial Prosecutor Bernabe Dumbran that the governor has ordered an indefinite stop to the release of monthly allowances of prosecutors and per diems for out-of-town travel.

"We are afraid that the cases [against] illegal drugs will get nowhere because of the pending predisposition of the Provincial Prosecutors Office to dismiss illegal drug cases," said Mejaredas in his letter.

In a telephone interview, Mejaredas said the subsidy amounts to around P5,000 monthly for each prosecutor and travel allowances.

Mejaredas said the governor received complaints from police chiefs of the province during a meeting on Jan. 8 on the dismissal of complaints against the suspected drug peddlers after the suspects were arrested by policemen.

Among the cases highlighted during the conference were those filed against Betty Cargillo and Bolly Trape in Balasan town in Iloilo.

"The case against Cargillo runs into of the biggest apprehensions made by our police operations and was being hailed as a big blow against illegal drugs syndicates," said Mejaredas in his letter to Dumbran.

Mejaredas said Cargillo was arrested in June last year after a buy-bust operation and subsequent raid on a drug den that the suspect was allegedly operating.

Several sachets of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride), along with firearms and cash amounting to about P40,000, were recovered, according to Mejaredas.

"A rumor was also used as a ruse, which was supposed to be an aggravating circumstance," he said.

But he said the policemen who worked on the case were surprised when prosecutors dismissed the complaints.

He said the same concern was also raised on the dismissal of the complaint against Trape who was arrested twice for illegal drug pushing or possession of illegal drugs.

Dumbran referred the allegations.

In a telephone interview, he said that the accusations that the prosecutors dismissed the cases without due cause was "baseless."

He said prosecutors dismissed the buy-bust conspiracy case against Cargillo but filed the illegal possession of firearms case based on the evidence presented and on court rules. They have also filed the case against Trape.

"We hope to enlighten the governor that these accusations are not true and that we have been doing our jobs," Dumbran said.

Mejaredas said in his letter that police operations also heard the rumor and tell phone numbers of our prosecutors in the wallet of Cargillo during his arrest.

"This is a matter of grave concern because the discovery about the names of these prosecutors and their cell phone numbers raises the possibility of prosecutors having ghost lists," Mejaredas said in his letter.

He did not identify the prosecutors in his letter and in the interview.

Dumbran said his office would file charges to any prosecutor found to be involved in any irregularities that he and Mejaredas should identify the names of friends whose phone numbers were allegedly found with Cargillo.

5 DOJ officials take leave

From page A1

Joseph and Joseph Tecson.

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) has claimed that it received information that P50 million changed hands that led to the prosecutors dropping the charges against the three young men.

Raid arms bandit

Dabu yesterday cried foul over Mr. Perez's decision, saying it should have also involved PDEA officials. He said Mojdeh ruling should have waited for the results of the investigation of the matter.

Department of Justice (DOJ) spokesperson Jesse del Azza, bandit to express support for their colleagues.

Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said there was no point for PDEA officials taking a leave because they're not the ones being accused.

Golez said the President's order should not be construed as "coercive in nature."

Ms. Arroyo has asked Gonzalez to form a panel to look into allegations of bribery that resulted in the dismissal of the drug charges against Broder, Joseph and Tecson.

In a radio interview, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said there would be an answer soon to the investigation.

"The President is really bothered by what's happening because illegal drugs are really a menace in our community," Ermita said (MB).

PDEA officials not exempt

Gonzalez indicated that PDEA officials, who also figured in the controversy surrounding the "Alabang Boys," should also go on leave.

"I'm trying to clarify this with the President. The PDEA people should also go on leave. They will also be investigated," Gonzalez said at a news conference.

He said the PDEA was not exempt from the ensuing investigation which will be undertaken by the new panel.

"They should have the same situation. Like our people because they were the ones who started this hullabaloo," the justice secretary said.

Taking back allegation

PDEA officials have a lot of explaining to do after they submitted that the P50-million bribe cash plant has later appointed to take back their allegation, according to Gonzalez.

Like the admission of PDEA Director General Rodolfo Santiago that there is no P50 million? Is there anything more important to him than the one who is accusing you telling you that there is no P50 million?" Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said the special investigation panel would be made up of the chair of the National Bank Commission, a retired magistrate, a law school dean and a bishop.

The panel would have 72 days after it was convened to come up with findings on the allegations of bribery against the justice officials and the issues raised against the PDEA in connection with the arrest of the "Alabang Boys."

Asked if he thought the probe was "lopsided" since PDEA officials weren't ordered to go on leave like the justice officials, Gonzalez said: "Maybe because in (Ms Arroyo's) mind it is about the P50-million bribe.

"Maybe it is just overlooked that the PDEA people are themselves

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez (right) walks past the portraits of former Chief Justices on his way to a weekly meeting with the Judicial and Bar Council on Monday. He had just come out of a closed-door meeting with state prosecutors at the Department of Justice. President Macapagal-Arroyo instructed Gonzalez and all justice officials and prosecutors accused of freeing drug suspects in exchange for a bribe to take a leave of absence. EVARISTO

on leave, being bribed ahead of the DOJ," Gonzalez said.

"And there is an identified person who offered the bribe. That is the big difference, there is the DOJ, there is cause," the justice secretary said.

Maj. Ruffinard Marcelino, head of the PDEA Special Enforcement Service, has claimed that he was offered three bribes ranging from P3 million to P20 million in exchange for the release of Broder, Tecson and Joseph.

At the hearing of the House committee on dangerous drugs last week, Marcelino told the P3-million offer was made by Jon Tecson on Sept. 20, 2008 on the day of the suspects' arrest. Tecson denied making the offer.

Briefing on illegal drugs

It was Dimaculler who made a call to the PDEA upon the request of an uncle of one of the suspects to ask why the agency was not releasing the three young men despite a resolution dismissing the charges against the suspects.

Dimaculler also directed his secretary to send a release order drafted by Broder and Tecson's lawyer to the office of Gonzalez for his signature.

Vicente "Tito" Sotto III, head of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB), is set to brief Mr. Arroyo about the arrest of the illegal drugs peddlers in the morning, the first in the agenda in the Cabinet meeting this morning.

Sotto yesterday said he would make a presentation on the status of all drug cases and government programs against illegal drugs.

Aside said the presentation would also touch on the "downfall" of the country in the fight against and the PDEA in the hope that concrete steps would be taken to improve the relationship among government agencies involved in the anti-drug campaign.

Citing a 2004 survey, he said there were 4.7 million regular and occasional drug users. A figure he hoped to validate in the ongoing household survey being conducted by the DDB.

Sotto said a separate survey whose initial results were made available last August placed the number of drug dependents at around two million. But he said the figure had yet to include casual drug users. *With a report from Christina V. Esguerra*

Bicolano WW II veteran fights another kind of war

From page A1

ner business, withdraw cash from his accounts and sign all papers pertaining to his pension in his Landbank account.

But the bank would not honor the 30% pension approved by the SSBO in Manila.

"I was angered by the bank policy and told them that they could just keep my husband's pension. But still my son and I brought my husband to the bank if only to get what is due to him," Mercedes said.

She also said the family did not have the money to follow up the case in Manila.

Ms. Lourdes U. Manzanilla, Landbank branch manager, said the bank should not be blamed and presented an immediate because it was simply implementing PVAO policy.

Policy to prevent fraud

This policy Manzanilla said, prohibits pension transactions of persons other than the veterans themselves in order to prevent the collection of funds of those who had already died but had presigned withdrawal slips.

Manzanilla said that if a veteran could not really come to the bank, its staff could go to the pensioner to deliver the check and make him sign on the withdrawal slip.

She said that another option was to transfer the veteran's account to a rural bank located near the veteran's residence to facilitate withdrawal.

Manzanilla said the PVAO required that the SPA be renewed every six months to be valid.

However, she promised to resolve the case immediately.

"It's frustrating," exclaimed Estefanía Prado, 81, district vice commander of Caamiran Ayos Veterans Association.

Not applicable

Inviting PVAO opponent in Manila to applicable to the pensioners or retirees of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, not World War II, Peters said.

The so-called SPA policy is not required because the pensions of our veterans are directly credited to their bank accounts, he explained.

Peters said the withdrawal slip with the authority to withdraw by the representative of the deposited would suffice for as long as it is signed by him.

"The retirees of the AFP receive their pensions in the form of checks that's why they are required to renovate an SPA if they were somebody else to encash their pension and also because very often they are not the ones receiving them," he said.

Peters also dismissed the opinion of withdrawing the powers of World War II veterans in the rural banks because these banks are not commercial banks in which their pensions are required to be deposited.

Prado, 69, the third in Canamelech's brood of six, said he hoped his father could win this "war" so that they would not be querying him on their books in the road where he could get on a bus to Lubo to withdraw his pension.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL
Tuesday, January 13, 2009
1st Week in Ordinary Time
Hilary
1st Reading: Heb 2:5-12
Gospel: Mk 1:21-28
Jesus and his disciples came into the town of Capernaum and Jesus began to teach in the synagogue during the Sabbath assemblies. The people were astonished at the way he taught, for he spoke as one having authority and not like the teachers of the Law.
It happened then a man with an evil spirit was in their synagogue and he shouted, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: You are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus faced him and said with authority, "Be silent and come out of this man!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and, with a loud shriek, came out of him. All the people were astonished and they wondered, "What is this? With what authority he preaches! He even orders evil spirits and they obey him!" And Jesus' fame spread throughout all the country of Galilee.
Commentary
Jesus came to announce and inaugurate God's reign over the world and human beings. He saw our devils as that which could help respond to God. Today's most tenacious devil is our addiction to war and violence. In a sad irony, traditional Christianity has tended to see the world as a battle between good and evil, a battle to be won at all costs. So, when there is conflict, one is dealing with an opponent who is completely the opposite. To survive, one must see them, have the battle—the enemy inevitably does the same.
Do we really believe that Christ's love can overwhelm the prevailing brand of global violence? Do we have the faith in Christian to unleash a healing form of personal nonviolence, equal to Christ's command to tackle at the heart of this life-power of evil-violence, the force of healing, unconditional enemy love, will furnish the witness of humankind's addiction to war and violence. This is God's kingdom. Pray that it will soon be realized!
Clarion Communication Foundation, Inc. 8 Maginhawa St., Teachers Village, Diliman, Quezon City 1104 Philippines. Tel. No. (02) 921-6138 (Editorial) (02) 921-6139 (Circulation) (02) 921-6140 (Business Office) Fax No. (02) 921-6138 www.clarion.com.ph Editorial Board: Fr. Jerry Orbos, SVD, Fr. Francisco Claver, SVD, Fr. Jose Clemente Ma. Ferrer, SVD, Fr. Jose Mario C. Francisco, SVD, Fr. Jose Ramon T. Villarin, SVD, Fr. Jose Rhoderick Nuncio

Israel sends reserve units to Gaza front

From page A1

the new air strikes or died from their wounds on Monday, Gaza health officials said. One of the dead was a militant killed in a northern Gaza battle.

Despite the tightening Israeli cordon, however, militants still managed to fire off a rocket on Monday morning, which fell near the southern town of Kiryat Gat but caused no casualties, police said.

The Israeli Army announced on Sunday that it had begun sending reserve units into Gaza to assist thousands of ground troops already in the territory.

The use of reservists is a strong signal that Israel is planning to escalate the offensive, which already has killed some 870 Palestinians, into a new, more punishing phase.

Israel launched the offensive last Dec. 27, bombarding Gaza with dozens of air strikes before sending in ground forces a week later. The operation is meant to halt years of Palestinian rocket attacks on southern Israel.

Fighting has persisted despite intermittent calls for a ceasefire. Thirteen Israelis, including 10 soldiers, have died.

With Israeli troops already surrounding Gaza's main population centers, Israeli leaders have given mixed signals on how much further the Army is ready to push, saying the operation is close to achieving its goals but vowing to press forward with peacemaking fronts.

"Israel is a country that reacts vigorously when its citizens are fired upon, which is a good thing," Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni told Israel Radio on Monday.

"That is something that Hamas now understands and that is how we are going to react in the future, if they do much as dare fire one missile at Israel," she said."

Booby traps

Israeli security officials believe they have struck a tough blow against Hamas, killing hundreds of the Islamic militant group's fighters, including top commanders.

The chairman of the Shin Bet security agency told the Cabinet on Sunday that Hamas leaders in Gaza were ready to surrender.

The group also says Hamas has been sending pitched battles against the ill-equipped Israelis, resorting instead to guerrilla tactics as its fighters melt into crowded residential areas.

Maj. Avital Leibovich, an Army spokesperson, said residential neighborhoods in Gaza were riddled with booby traps and explosives, and in some cases dummies were placed at apartment entrances to simulate militants and rigged to explode if soldiers approached.

Hamas, at least publicly, has vowed to continue fighting.

Israeli ground forces made their deepest foray yet into Gaza City on Sunday, with tanks rumbling down residential neighborhoods and infantry fighting urban warfare in streets in buildings with Hamas militants, Palestinian residents said.

The Army "is advancing more into urban areas," Leibovich said. "Since the majority of the Hamas militants are pretty much is hiding in those places, mainly urban places, there we operate in those areas."

Decision on 3rd phase

Israeli leaders are expected to decide in the next day or two on whether to push the offensive into a third phase...in which the Army takes over larger areas of Gaza.

This move would require the use of thousands of reserve units massed on the border with Gaza.

A push into densely crowded urban areas would threaten the lives of many more civilians.

More than 20,000 Palestinians have already fled Gaza's rural border areas and crowded into nearby camps, shaping with relatives and at UN schools turned into makeshift shelters.

International aid groups have repeatedly said Israel must do more to protect Palestinian civilians, who are believed to make up about half of the dead.

Officials and several thousand reservists were already in Gaza as part of preparations for the new phase.

For the time being, the units have been taking over areas cleared out by the regular troops, allowing those forces to push forward toward new targets.

Israeli government spokesperson Mark Regev said Israel was "very close" to achieving its three key goals: destroying Hamas' military capabilities, ending the rocket fire and preventing it from resuming.

Quality targets

Regev would not say whether the next phase of the offensive would take place, saying in any case that the reserve units could be used against "quality targets" such as bunkers and command posts.

Early Monday, Israeli Navy gunboats fired more than 25 shells at Gaza City, striking fires and shaking office buildings. The military said that the targets were Hamas installations but had no immediate information about the shelling that began just after midnight.

German and British envoys pressed efforts to negotiate an end to the war even though Israel and Hamas have ignored a UN Security Council resolution calling for an immediate and durable ceasefire.

Israel is demanding an end to years of rocket attacks, as well as international guarantees to prevent Hamas from smuggling weapons into Gaza through the porous Egyptian border.

This complex goal would require Egyptian and international help in shutting off the smuggling routes.

Israel has been bombing tunnels that run under the Egypt-Gaza border.

'Elements of agreement'

In an e-mail message early Monday, Hamas leader Ismail Radwan said his group would not consider a ceasefire before Israel stopped its attacks and pulled back from Gaza. He also demanded the opening of all border crossings, emphasizing the Rafah crossing with Egypt.

That would relieve pressure in pressure on the checkpoint territory but also strengthen Hamas control of Gaza, an outcome prospect his hostile rebellion is built to the fighting will just give Hamas another opportunity to evade.

In Cairo, Egypt's state-owned news agency reported progress to renew talks with Hamas but provided no specifics.

International Mideast envoy Tony Blair was in Cairo on Monday, telling reporters that "the elements of an agreement" for a ceasefire are in place.

In Paris, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner on Monday said that European military observers should be sent to Gaza to monitor any eventual ceasefire.

Ex-solon denies Palace links in Limkaichong case

From page A1

assent to target Pono as part of a supposed scheme to keep Mr Arroyo in power beyond 2010.

Former Sen. Franklin Drilon, chair of the Liberal Party, said that Malacañang wanted Pono out so it could appoint a replacement who would do a political bidding in the House probe.

"These people are using me to pursue their political interests," Pono said.

Drilon, for example, wants to get elected again for office on the balikbayan vote, he added.

But Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez on Monday said that the Kabaliktan ng Mahirang Pilipinas (Kampi) would support an impeachment complaint against Pono if what the Chief Justice had revealed in court was unpreachable evidence.

Suarez, an official of Kampi, said the President's political party would give Pono, also a party member, the opportunity to explain the details of the disqualification case.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday said that he also had heard of the conversation between the Limkaichong case and the impeachment complaint against Pono from a person close to Pono.

Unverified but loud

Supreme Court spokesperson Midas Marquez described the allegation as "unverified but very loud."

Gonzalez said he heard about the link between the two issues before it hit the headlines over the weekend.

"I heard from one of the friends of one of the parties in fairness in that person, he might just be thinking aloud about something like that with the context of the [oral] argument," he said in a news conference.

Attention deficit

Gonzalez said what he heard wasn't worth of a plan to impeach Pono. "The conversation was about the Limkaichong case and how they have already won it. That was just a passing statement that [the delay in the promulgation] is something that can be used for impeachment," he said.

Malacañang yesterday stepped up its attack on critics who had alleged that it was using Pono' petitions to go after the Chief Justice.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Anthony Golez said the critics were suffering from attention deficit. "The usual motive of our critics is [to seek] attention," he said.

If indeed he was after Pono's neck, Pono said he could easily file an impeachment complaint to the House and not one of his friends there to endorse it.

"Say how to have enough grounds to impeach the Chief Justice," he said. "So far, I have not contemplated on that. But if nothing happens with the case, we'll think of other ways."

Not enough

Quezon City Rep. Mélani Cabrador said that the accusation against Pono was not enough to impeach him.

Defensor said that he construed the alleged conspiracy short of Pono in the Limkaichong case and evidenced that the Chief Justice's explanation that the en banc resolutions was not docketed because it did not have the full concurrence of at least eight justices was satisfactory.

"Based on the news accounts, it is not an important offense," he said.

Political intrigue

Speaker Prospero Nograles dismissed the impeachment talk against Pono as "a dangerous political intrigue."

Nograles said that "not a single member of the House is inclined to endorse an impeachment complaint" against Pono.

Nograles yesterday wouldn't identify the source of the rumor of the plan to impeach Pono. "What we are confirming are the ones we hear," he said at a news conference.

Asked what reports the high court was receiving, Nograles said: "Times Jan. 19" (where the House resumes session) an impeachment case will be filed against the Chief Justice. Perhaps there would also be privilege speeches."

Nograles indicated that the reports might be unconfirmed but were nonetheless difficult to ignore.

Saying he's reports of moves to oust Pono were "a cause for serious concern," a group monitoring new appointees of Mrs Arroyo to the high court yesterday said it would watch closely developments and reveal "to interests at the highest level."

Disturbing information

Romay Ilore Supreme (RIO) convenor Rev. Francis Pangilinan, said he had also received "disturbing information" that Pono "seemed to be efforts to undermine the leadership" of Pono at the high court.

But Pangilinan said he was still in the process of validating the reports.

"But it's a rush and we are frantic. We're gathering information not rushed to our conspiracy," the minister told reporters after a meeting with fellow RIO convenors that included lawyers Romeo Lagdameo and Roberto Farrell of the Philippine Bar Association and Alberto Lim of the Makati Business Club.

Asked whether the information he was getting pointed to Malacañang as behind the alleged plot to oust Pono, Pangilinan said there was a "need to look at it deeper" considering that he noted "the personalities by themselves are aligned with the President."

Lagdameo said it was possible these efforts were meant to "destabilize the Supreme."

"They're just doing this to have him to resign because they know it's not going anywhere. They'll make him appear corrupt so he'll be forced to quit," she said.

Panfilo Lacson, counsel of Limkaichong, said it was premature to comment on the alleged impeachment move against Pono as there was no formal complaint yet filed and everything was still conjectural.

In a statement, Lacson said that if the news report were true, "such complaint will not even get to first base since any first year law student knows that a draft and signed decision of the court is not considered a judgment until and unless it is duly promulgated by the court."

With a report from Norman Bordadora

DepEd includes chess in school curriculum

From page A1

get better grades. Lapus has ordered the integration of chess into the curriculum of grade school and high school students.

In a memorandum Jan. 8, Lapus ordered that chess should be included in the Edukasyon sa Pagpapahalaga ng Kaisewan subject of Grade 3 to 6 students and in the Physical Education classes of those in high school.

"Global studies have shown that chess is a game that improves individual cognitive skills and analytical skills. Children who exposed to the game at an early age achieve academically better or even faster than those who have not been engaged in said game," Lapus said.

"Likewise, chess is among the activities that help build numerical skills, concentration, self-confidence, self-esteem and in making disciplined decisions," he added.

Chess mentors needed

To ensure the success of the program, Lapus ordered school divisions to look for chess experts in their communities who could serve as mentors to teachers and students and to encourage these chess "following the three sets to a class each."

School divisions are also responsible for training "a core of supervisors, principals or teachers, who will mentor other teachers" about the game, Lapus said.

The divisions should also monitor and evaluate "the social effects of chess on children."

Regional offices of the Department of Education, on the other hand, should coordinate the use of chess as a "strategy in developing higher order skills and values and to provide technical assistance."

They were also tasked to submit to the Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education the list of schools implementing "the strategy as well as the results of the assessment."

Sportsmanship, bravery

Lapus also ordered the department's central office to formulate guidelines, manual or lesson exemplars on the use of chess and track the program's impact on students.

Upheld in the DepEd website the said guidelines, manual or lesson exemplars. Other aspects or allowable could be instituted to enrich said materials through the Internet," Lapus said.

But chess will bring you more than just good grades.

"Playing these provides opportunities for practice and reinforcement in perseverance, honesty, and sportsmanship," Lapus said.

Not an exact match but sarge feels great

From page A1

around the Capitol and the White House for a few hours.

"The honor can be part of this historic event," said Brooks, who met a large contingent from the local news media a few blocks from the White House after he finished riding in the parade with the stand-in for the president's wife, Michelle (played by Navy Officer 1st Class Lolan McCray of the Navy).

Momentous, weird

"It felt great to be Sammy for one day," the sergeant from Fayetteville, North Carolina, told reporters after the drive-by. He said for this Jan. 20 presidential inaugural.

The spectacle felt both momentous and kind of weird.

Still, from a distance, it had the look and feel of the real thing. As the sky over the Capitol grew light, cannons boomed.

Amplified speeches and announcements could be heard several blocks away, with the honor guard, color guard and musicians of dignitaries like stand-in Bamm's assembled along the western end of the Capitol.

The Marine Band played the National Anthem and "Hail to the Chief" to honor the Biden's new presidential era.

"It's important to rehearse this as it goes off flawlessly on the inauguration day," said Navy Chief Petty Officer Lucy Quinn, spokesperson for the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee.

"The president is supposed to take the oath of office at noon to swear as can possibly be timed," she added.

Not an exact match

Several hundred onlookers, reporters and photographers braved frigid predawn temperatures for the chance to get a bit closer to the Bam action than they probably will for the real thing on Jan. 20.

Months to go, well before the legal age of 35 to be president.

His principal qualification to play Obama was that he bore a rough resemblance to the real thing in skin color, height and weight. Brooks stands 6 feet, 2 inches tall and weighs 185 pounds.

But he's not an exact match. When Brooks met Obama on Thursday "he said my ears weren't selling as fast."

Still, organizers said Brooks filled the basic spatial parameters for lighting and camera angles checks — after seats were in the inaugural stage.

Even a faux President George W. Bush showed up as officials worried out the kinks in their plans for what will likely be the biggest ceremony the nation's capital has ever hosted.

On the east side of the Capitol, the military practiced landing the helicopter that will take Bush — Andrews Air Force Base after Obama has become president.

'Historical moment'

Then the helicopter was replaced by a mock-up of the presidential limo and carry the new president to the White House.

Shortly after 8 a.m. Bamm, he stand-in for Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. delivered the oath of office to Bam-Bamm, who was flanked by the Bam Michelle and stand-ins for daughters Malia and Sasha (played by the children of military personnel).

Bam-Bamm's entire inaugural speech consisted of six words: "My fellow Americans," he said. "God bless America."

Nearing a grin ever wider than Obama's, Brooks told reporters after the daylong drive: "I know it's a change in history ... and it's a historical moment that only happens, that's only going to happen, one time." Reports from Wire Reports, Reuters, Associated Press and AP

Winslet, Fey shine at 66th Golden Globe Awards

From page A1

in the motion picture category—dramatic actor for Mickey Rourke and best song for Bruce Springsteen.

Living up to its underdog theme, however, "Slumdog Millionaire" swept all four of its categories, including best drama and director for Danny Boyle. The movie also won best screenplay and musical score, Boyle up in prominence for the Academy Awards.

"Golden Globes, or the Hfa as we very affectionately refer to them—your mail, pulsating affection for our film is nearly appreciated. Really, deeply appreciated," Boyle said.

"Slumdog Millionaire" features a generally unknown cast to the story of an orphan boy in Mumbai who rises from terrible hardship to become a champ on India's version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," all the while trying to reunite with a lost love from his childhood.

"We really weren't expecting to be here in America at all or any time, so it's just amazing to be here," said Rizwan Bamdey, whose winning script was adapted from Vikas Swarup's novel "Q & A."

Finally for Winslet

Winslet, who has previously been nominated five times without winning at both the Globes and Oscars, won for her role as a woman in a crumbling marriage in "Revolutionary Road" and as a former Nazi concentration camp guard in "The Reader."

Directed by Winslet's husband, Sam Mendes, "Revolutionary Road" reunited the actress with her "Titanic" costar Leonardo DiCaprio.

To DiCaprio, Winslet gushed: "I've loved you for 13 years and your performance in this film is nothing short of spectacular."

To Mendes, she added: "Thank you for directing this film, Sam, and thank you for killing us every single day and really enjoying us actually being in each horrific pain."

Penélope Cruz's Spanish romance "Vicky Cristina Barcelona" won for best musical/comedy film.

The three films that led the Globe field with five nominations each—"The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," "Doubt" and "Frost/Nixon"—all were shut out.

A run for honors

"I want you to know that I really wanna leave very lucky I am to have the year that I've had this year," said Fey, the "30 Rock" star and creator who capped a run of honors for the series and garnered acclaim for her female Palin impression.

Alec Baldwin, who plays Fey's boss in the behind-the-scenes comedy about a TV variety show, was honored with the Golden Globe for best comedy actor.

"When you do this show, the first thing you want to say is, Thank you Tina, thank you Tina," Baldwin said.

"Mad Men," AMC's series drama about 1960s America as seen through the prism of Madison Avenue, repeated its victory as best TV drama.

Posthumous award

As expected, the late Heath Ledger earned the supporting-actor Globe for his diabolical turn as the Joker in the Batman blockbuster "The Dark Knight."

The Globe win leaves Ledger's youngsters for the supporting-actor honor in the Oscars, whose nominations come out Jan. 22, the one-year anniversary of the actor's death from an accidental overdose of prescription drugs.

The award was accepted by "The Dark Knight" director Christopher Nolan, who said he and his collaborators were buoyed by the enormous acclaim and acceptance the film and Ledger's performance have gained worldwide.

"All of us who worked with Heath on 'The Dark Knight' accept with an awful mixture of sadness but incredible pride," Nolan said. "After Heath joined, you saw a hole ripped in the heart of cinema."

Only one actor has ever won a posthumous Oscar, best-actor recipient Peter Finch for 1976's "Network."

Long road back

Rourke won for a role as a former wrestling star who gets a last chance at glory in the ring, a choice that mirrors the actor's life after he declashed his career with bad-boy behavior.

"It's been a very long road back for me," said Rourke, who praised not his thanks to "The Wrestler" director Darren Aronofsky.

Other acting winners were Sally Hawkins as musical comedy actress for her role as an eternal optimist in "Happy-Go-Lucky," and Colin Farrell for musical or comedy actor for "In Bruges," in which he plays a hit man hiding low in a Belgian tourist town.

The other romance "Mall of war for best animated feature, Director Andrew Stanton thanked producer Oscar Autonsen and distributor Walt Disney, saying the animated love story between two robots who communicate in beeps and squeaks "couldn't have been made anywhere else."

Beaty glory

The benign language Cliff price wasn in Israel's "Waltz With Bashir," director Ari Folman's animated documentary about a soldier struggling to recall suppressed memories of his involvement in the war with Lebanon.

The 66th annual Globes, the town's second biggest movie celebration after the Academy Awards, removed to their somewhat longer glory.

Last year's Globe show was scrapped after stars said they would stay away in honor of picket lines by the Writers Guild of America, which was engaged in a bitter strike against producers. In its place was a briskly paced news conference where winners were announced from a podium.

The Globes serve as a barometer for potential Oscar contenders, often singling out deserving newcomers who might have been overlooked among bigger names stars. Relative unknown Hilary Swank won her cinematic success at the Globes for 1999's "Boys Don't Cry," then went on to an upset win at the Oscars over nimrod Bening, who had been considered the front-runner for "American Beauty." This year's Oscar ceremony comes on Feb. 22.

The Globes are presented by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, a group of about 90 reporters covering show business for overseas outlets. AP

NPA apologizes to Masbate gov, says she wasn't target

LEGAZPI CITY—SOMETHING IT WAS behind the explosion of two roadside bombs Sunday that wounded Masbate Gov. Riza Kho and a security aide, the New People's Army (NPA) apologized to the provincial executive, saying she was not the target of the attack.

Greg Baldares, spokesperson of the unionized-led National Democratic Front (NDF) in Bicol, said the NPA-Jose Ingoing Command had ambushed a special patrol car and did not expect Kho's vehicle to be just behind it.

"The attack was not intended for Governor Kho as the police have been claiming. We apologize to her," said Baldares in a phone interview with the Inquirer.

Baldares said it was not true the patrol car, which belonged to the 503rd Provincial Police Mobile Group (PPMG), was part of Kho's convoy.

He said the NPA also fired on the PPMG vehicle, wounding five of its passengers.

"Our commander did not fire on Kho's vehicle, a civilian car, and so let a misfortune solely from the scene," Baldares said.

He said the attack was part of the increased tactical offensives ordered by the Communist Party of the Philippines ahead of the 2009 Balikatan exercises in Bicol. (*See story below.*)

One of the NPA rebels suspected of being behind the attack was identified by Bicol police director Chief Supt. Nestor Sangui as Joel Adlaga, a former member of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Military ready to repel Reds during Balikatan

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines (AFP) is not taking any chances when the annual RP-US Balikatan military exercise begins on April in three Bicol provinces.

A new battalion of 500 soldiers will be deployed to beef up security in the region to thwart any attacks by the New People's Army (NPA), said Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Delgado, 9th Infantry Division chief.

"I have the 49th Infantry Battalion (New Bataan)—that will be deployed here search en areas covered by the exercise," Balikatan said reporters in Camp Aguinaldo by phone.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) announced on its website Sunday it had ordered the NPA, its armed wing, to attack Filipino and American troops and launch tactical offensives during Balikatan.

"We are prepared for that... as far we are conducting several meetings and seminars to talk about security," Delgado said.

Some seven 54th year, the RP-US Balikatan exercises will be staged in Albay, Masbate and Sorsogon—provinces identified as remaining strongholds of the NPA.

But the military stressed the exercises in Bicol would complete only humanitarian projects like medical missions and engineering works.

In Legazpi City Col. Ariel Bernardo, commander of the Army's 901st Brigade, said they were prepared for attacks by the NPA.

"It only shows [the CPP/NPA] is antidevelopment, antipeace and antigovernment. Who would not want schools and roads to be built and medical and dental missions to benefit the people?" Bernardo said.

But the National Democratic Front (NDF), the CPP's political arm, has charged Balikatan (increasing shoulder-to-shoulder) was a front for another agenda.

Greg Baldares, Bicol spokesperson of the NDF, said Balikatan could be used to spy on revolutionary movements and so to allow US soldiers to intervene in the armed battles between government troops and NPA guerrillas. With reports from Joyce Abellar Jr. and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

ADVISORY

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2009
INQUIRER
OPINION

Desperate hope

1984 IS ONCE AGAIN UPON US. WE REFER TO THE novel by that title by George Orwell, a prophetic, nightmarish vision of a "negative utopia." In Orwell's generation, and even up to now, no other novel has stimulated so much loathing for tyranny and so much desire for freedom.

In "1984" the slogans of the Party are the following:

WAR IS PEACE
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH

Under the Arroyo administration, the following might be the slogans of the times:

FALSEHOOD IS TRUTH
CORRUPTION IS SAINTLINESS
BLACK IS WHITE, AND EVIL IS GOOD

At no time in the history of the current administration has the truth of these supposed "slogans" been more strongly demonstrated than the present. Consider the following:

An uptight, incorruptible, right-thinking Chief Justice is prepared to be impeached, whereas a President who has been charged with corruption, violations of many provisions of the Constitution and other serious crimes, has always gotten away scot-free every time articles of impeachment are filed against her.

Whistle-blowers like Area Ramirez, Rodolfo Lozada and Maj. Ferdinand Marcelino are either wrongfully prosecuted, kidnapped and murdered and criticized, while Benjamin Abalos and Virgilio Garcillano are allowed to resign without first being made to answer the charges against them.

A reformist governor like Ed Panlilio is constantly being subjected to all forms of political harrassment, while congressmen and local government officials who have been winning the people's money are given even more money in brown paper bags to support a president whose legitimacy is constantly being questioned.

Generals who are accused of killing unarmed militants are praised in a joint session of Congress while other generals and officers who dare to criticize high officials for their questionable acts are arrested and detained.

The people are fed half-truths by government spokespersons. The President will not answer "political questions" from reporters, for fear, possibly of giving away her real plans for 2010. The truth, which is the oxygen of democracy, is kept hidden from the people. Sometimes it is exposed only at a critical time, as what happened when the revisionist Memorandum of Agreement on the Ancestral Domain became known only on the eve of its signing.

We could go on and on, but the idea is this: In this administration,

FALSEHOOD IS TRUTH
CORRUPTION IS SAINTLINESS
BLACK IS WHITE, AND EVIL IS GOOD.

Social critic Erich Fromm, commenting on "1984," said: "Orwell, like the Jacobins of the other negative utopias [Aldous Huxley, 'Brave New World'] is not a prophet of disaster. He wants to warn and to awaken us. He still hopes—but in contrast to the other writers of the utopias in the earlier phase of Western society his hope is a desperate one. The hope can be realized only by recognizing, as '1984' teaches us, the danger with which all men are confronted today, the danger of a society of automatons who will have lost every trace of individuality, of love, of critical thought, and yet who will not be aware of it because of 'doublethink'."

We hope we Filipinos have not been reduced to automatons who have lost their individuality and their critical thought, and who have lost the capacity to rage against falsehood, dishonesty and corruption. Perhaps they are not protesting too much because the great majority of them are more immediately concerned with earning a living, putting food on the table and providing for the other basic needs of their families. Perhaps it is because they are so caught up in the daily rat race that they do not have time to engage in political action. Perhaps they are just waiting for the tipping point.

Many commentators have said that Filipinos seem to have lost their capacity to express their moral outrage as what is happening around them. Let us hope that this is not true, and that in time they will become engaged citizens of their country who value truth, integrity, honesty and freedom.

EDITORIAL

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'Funeral water'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE COLUMN "LOCO PIZA, MOR JOKE" (Inquirer, 1/6/09) triggered comment on the plight of prisoners. Many lack the political clout or cash of the former jailbird from Ayala. Instead, they waste away in festering jails.

"I visited the Malabon city jail," e-mailed Jun Arabejo. "Upon entering the inmates' room, army ants (Daily odor) attacked my nostrils even though a huge industrial fan blew at them.

"Then, there was big applause. It was the first time that anyone inside dalere [Wolff to Robert]... 'Pare,' excitement an inmate. 'Si Robert nga dalaw.'

"I brought two containers of mineral water, some P60 worth of pan de sal and 11 sachets of palamon. Aba, si Robert nakakatipid na ng mineral water, sa halip na 'funeral water,' the guard-concierge said.

Sinundo SI. Bid is the lawyer of Jalo Mangansakan and Pendatun chief. He e-mail, crouched out by the RMF's "media affairs" unit, claimed the pair are doing just fine. "Today as in International jail service (sic) by serving only the stark." Excerpts:

The RMF oversees 1,000 jails nationwide. Prison population increases by about 3 percent annually. The jail population is projected to exceed 90,000 by 2013.

Today's jails hold 11,020 inmates. "Of this total, 35% are minor offenders," he claims. The total is "not 20,000" as reported by the Philippine Bar Association and cited by Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

He denies the new the Children Foundation report that some children in Southern Metro Manila prisons were raped and sodomized. "The RMF does not mistreat child detainees. We keep them in cells separate from adult offenders, if there is an absence of youth detention centers... Female detainees are assigned in custodial centers under appropriate care.

"The RMF is strengthening its paralegal programs. [That] facilitates release of inmates. The bureau coordinates... with the Supreme Court whose Justice on Wheels program has hastened releases.

Elections

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

MY THANKS TO ARMANDO DOROON FOR his kind words last Friday. I don't quite know what solicited his wan rebirthing to, but my thanks anyway.

I just want to correct the impression he has about me. "If he has his way, it seems that he would rather overhaul our system of governance and do away with elections in choosing our leaders." I have never advocated. The opposite is true. I've advocated nothing else. I'm perfectly serious about elections and I see no other way in choosing our leaders.

I agree completely with Winston Churchill: Democracy may be a horrible system, but it's still better than all the others. The same is true about elections.

What may have given the impression that I would rather do away with elections is my endorsement of People Power as an agent of change. The one is not antithetical to the other. The one does not preclude the other. In the particular case of the GMA regime, the one in fact endorses the other like a long lost child, at least. I've always advocated People Power against this regime because I believe wholeheartedly in elections as the only way in choosing our leaders.

The GMA regime is not the product of elections. It is an illegitimate regime. It is a coup regime. I refuse to pay taxes to such a regime, even if I can't do anything about the EVAT and the tax automatically withdrawn from my pay. I remain compelled that we have allowed such a regime to come to pass. It remains more ashamed of that the same regime should contemplate ruling over longer through Charter change.

It is an illegitimate regime because of "Hello, Garci." "Hello, Garci" by itself couldn't GMA's claim to legitimacy, whatever she talks dressed. And the talks could only be suspect because of it. Cheating, particularly of that magnitude and obnoxious, is an entitlement to illegitimacy.

The Philippines is not the first country to be tied to Watergating. In the United States and Europe, as seen in the recent scams, they jail the rich and powerful for less.

I have always said in my editorials that Cheating never had any problem with the question, "Who do you want to replace GMA?" That is not a formidable question. That is an easy one. It's not a question of who I want, or who you want, or who anybody else wants. It is a question of who the voters want. The one who should replace GMA is the one the voters want as president. The problem is that GMA is an illegitimate president. The solution is to have a legitimate president. That can be done only by elections.

Which I have always called for. Since the "Hello, Garci" tape came out, I have called for "snap elections." Not succession, because, for all his brays time when the presidency was vacated, the presidency was never occupied after 2004. Those elections should have been held way back in 2005, when the "Hello, Garci" tape surfaced. We have June 30 Boracay and Fr. Joel Rumbaoa as fonts for that—I didn't happen.

In fact, the question, "Who do you want to replace GMA," shouldn't be asked at all. It is inside out, it is anti-democratic. It advances the most dangerous notion, which was articulated during the height of the Garci scandal by GMA supporters, some of whom claimed to be Filipinos living in the US, who wrote letters to the editor saying that if GMA cheated in the last elections, well and good, it prevented an Erap clone in the person of FPJ from becoming president. I don't know if they were really who they said they were, but let them try that argument in the US and see if they do not get their green card revoked.

The day people who presume themselves enlightened deem that the "wrong" candidate is the elected leader becoming democratic is all it needs to the day we cease to be a democracy and become a tyranny. Or a political order run by a few, which in fact we have become today. Our constant need is to prevent an evil from happening, and has already happened.

The best way to prevent the danger of an Erap being elected president. That is the price you pay for democracy. That is not helped by limiting the voters to those who have gone to school or other elitist measures. And in any case, who says Intramuros was ever ruled by people of learning? Statesmanship have been among the rarest superstars of tyrants. The danger of an Erap being elected president can only be solved by massive education, or offering a better alternative, not by denying the mass the vote. I grant that is not easy, but who says that the mass should be in the state they are in—impoverished, uninformed, and benighted—in an indictment of us to begin with. In any case, horrible as that situation is, the democracy, the alternative are worse.

In any case as well, we do not lack for recourse. Which brings me back to People Power. Barring impeachment, or where the law has fallen in the grip of the leaders, we can always count on Erap by People Power. People Power is not antithetical to elections, it is supportive of it. It affirms something fundamental or sacred about elections, which is that voting, voted to power is not an entitlement to steal, it is a command to serve. It is not an exemption from ethics and morality, it is a commitment to them. It is not a privilege, it is a duty.

The betrayal of public trust voids the vote, the financing of the public will constitute a ground for ouster. The point of holding elections is not just to hold elections, or to allow the thumbs to indulge in their favorite pastime, which is gambling. The point of elections is to produce leaders we can look to, and lead the nation not by the nose but by its conscience.

I am serious about elections, enough to suppress no one held in 2010.

Closing the Christmas season

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IT WAS JUST AND SENSIBLE OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo to order the suspension of the deportation of Aaron Pelonia implicated in the aborted release of the Alabang boys. It would be a miscarriage of justice if Lawyer Pelonia's lessons were to be disbarred for drafting the release letter on DOJ letterhead, while Undersecretary Alan Purisima-Bluecaller is not meted out disciplinary action for facilitating the transmittal to the justice secretary. Lawyers will always do everything to facilitate things for clients. But in fact Aaron Pelonia has been suffering adversity for doing far worse things than what Secretary did. But Bluecaller was surely something wrong was happening to the DOJ but did little to stop it. As for the prosecutors in that case publishing the air wish fantasies of the purse charge of bribery. It is time to overhaul the justice system.

* * *

For Filipinos the super-long Christmas season that liturgically closes with the baptism of Jesus is always hectic because of the endless social and family gatherings. But for many outmoded families, it becomes a dreading pure as Noche Buena draws near. Many of the OFWs are coming home all over the United States and Asia and as far as South Africa, with some coming to visit ailing relatives. My husband's clan reunion is always held on the second Sunday of January and this year we are in-law Norma Tabuso Cunanan-Ong, while the Olivarezes have theirs on Christmas evening at the residence of our sister-in-law Nieves Cuchia Olivarez, who always turns out a perfect turkey and pork de diner that is the envy of the clan. The smaller Cunanan clan is more manageable compared to the Olivarezes who agree every Christmas to do away with the traditional gift giving as more subtle to some. But the super fun time is little kids, making their names to be called under so forget it soon enough.

* * *

Now that's for their my family hopping from the Cunanan clan gathering at Imelda Marcos' Tropical Hut residence, where an amateur family band led by kingly kept everyone awake the year to the Olivarez clan gathered at the home of my brother in law Oscar Cuhag, where a New Year's Mass was officiated by Fr. Fidel Cuhag, followed by happy games and dancing till 2 a.m. After attending the conference on climate change in Poland earlier last month, I anticipated coming back there to detect from publishing the air wish fantasies of the purse charge of bribery. It is time to overhaul the justice system.

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The season also produced various rites of passage. We attended the debut of Dominique Katrina Sala, daughter of our good friends Jo and Melissa Sala, at the Conservatory Alice Reyes and Nelson Reyes, chief of Philippine Stock Exchange development department, at Annabel's garden on Santa Monica Avenue in Quezon City. It had been ages since I attended a debut and it was fun watching the 18-young lady squirm to one all the debutante waltz to the tune of "Sunrise, Sunset."

Weddings of relatives and friends' children added to the season's excitement. Ana Maldeis Chanco, the pretty daughter of my US-based associate Arlene and her husband Leonel Chanco of the prominent Lucio Tan family, married Paul Sebio at San Agustin Church, with a fun reception at the ballet Philippine Plaza ballroom hosted by two-two-ayes guys.

Jojo Binilio, the architect-son of U.P. Law dean Amado Valdez and his wife Judy Ann-Ledda Valdez, whose petite child is Filipino make all

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Women must be heard on Gaza

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

AS THE FIGHTING IN GAZA ESCALATES, EVEN as Israeli military authorities assure that the end to the violence is near, it's time for the voices of Palestinian and Israeli women to be heard and heeded, if peace is to come to that part of the world.

Isa International, an NGO that works on global issues of gender, development and communications, said in a statement that they "share and support the women's voices and security of both Palestinian and Israeli women."

"Their views, visions and aspirations are seldom reflected in the mainstream media," isa continues. "their stories, struggles, fears and hopes are rarely heard. Yet in the world, who have been speaking of peace between territories for years, it is ongoing human tragedy that such voices have not been reflected in the formal peace processes and agreements.

Two Israeli Arab women and Israeli women are now now calling for a just and sustainable peace."

At the same time, the NGO demands an immediate end to the violence and the commencement in Gaza, and "the reopening of Gaza to facilitate the flow of much needed humanitarian aid," extending their solidarity to the "innocent civilians, and especially the women and children, victims of the military and fundamentalism on both sides of the conflict."

* * *

THE STATEMENT also quotes at length from declarations made by groups of Palestinian, Israeli and international women's groups who have called on Gaza. The International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Palestinian-Israeli Peace, a group formed under the auspices of Unifem, has demanded "an immediate cessation of the aggression by the Israeli military forces in Gaza, which has already cost them dearly of lives." The group calls for the "immediate resumption of peace negotiations based on the Arab Peace Initiative as the only way of bringing an end to the unacceptable and intolerable unsustainable peace between Israel and Palestine and in the region."

The Coalition of Women's Organizations for Peace in Israel likewise issued a statement demanding "an end to the bombing and other forms of death," and calling for the immediate cease-of-hostilities and deliberations be pursued. "The dance of death and devastation must come to an end," said the Israeli women. "We demand that war no longer be an option, nor violence a strategy. We call on all sides to respect civilian society we want a one in which every individual can lead a life of security—personal, economic and social."

In any area, the biggest victims always are civilians, especially women and children, as well as the old and infirm, who have neither training nor arms, armor nor camouflage, to prevent or defend themselves. No wonder, as the statements attest, women are the ones who are the most anxious for peace, women on both sides of the conflict."

* * *

THERE'S another hotbed brewing, but it's taking place in our own political landscape—already littered with the detritus of previous skirmishes, real bellicose, straw-man and riveted scandals.

This one centers on the person of Chief Justice Reynato Puno, who is rumored to be the subject of an impending impeachment allegedly because he supposedly is a descendant of Bolagtas, married to the Moody Sarmiento in a beautiful wedding at the Jade Fernwood in Quezon City, marked by a lot of hip-hop and commotion. Former political chiefs Joseph Estrada and Jose de Venecia, three liberals of the Philippines, graced the occasion. But it was left to Gloa de Venecia to impart the ultimate romance and some wisdom to the newlyweds. Said Gloa: I believe in destiny and unlike singer Jaya Fernandez, who thinks it is magic that brings people together, I believe that in this world full of strangers, God had Anja in mind when he created that someone Sarah's eyes from rainbows with. So, Anja and Sarah, reach for your dreams together, share the joys of parenthood, love your wife and care enthusiast much other and fall in love all over again. Her counsel: does a beauty as old as time for you politicians.

* * *

The third wedding of Maria Antonia Miut Arroyo, daughter of Sen. Juker Arroyo and Odella Gregorio Arroyo, to her beau of eight years, Chino Jaime Sauer, at basement—de San Antonio, followed by an elegant reception at the Intercontinental Hotel. Style of Philippine Tatler magazine by the bride's mother. Nowadays church doors are shut unless the bride arrives, so she can make a dramatic entrance when they are finally opened. Not so in the case of Miut, who was waiting at the nuptial doors as he waited for his daughter to enter, looking pensive. Many softened the fact that despite his being a senior member of the Senate, he invited only two politicians, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and Senator Loi Estrada, who were associated with him since married for them.

* * *

A palatial blessing of this Christmas season creator Glen Eduardo Chanco, Jr., and his wife Cecilia Bagatsing, gave birth to a healthy 7 lb baby girl yesterday about the proud father, japanese investment banker Keiichi Mita, named Tanaka, which means Precious Child, as Tanaka for short. Christen-wished triplets as a second name, and they asked as excited first-time grandparents to choose a third name and we gave Thereon, in honor of St. Therese of Lisieux.

One of us

ALL BROUGHT TO THE PACIFIC BY LA NOVA SAVETY, ONE operation struck me for its unnerving silence: how was it that practically every Filipino automatically—and so passionately—cheered for Manny Pacquiao and not his opponent? The seventh Scottish because the names were obvious, unlike the American, Pacquiao is "one of us"—meaning, he happened to have been accidentally born like the rest of us to the same stock of mixed-race Malay.

As a result of events not of our own making because the Philippines (most small for the immense state he's produced, UBH, subtle limit of us).

This logic does not seem to apply however to other national teammates whose race and likely to automatically root for one contestant just because he was born on our side of the humanity. And yet, when it's in Vegas, for a Filipino to not root for a Filipino runs into unthinkable and almost treasonous.

Perhaps no single event in recent memory proves so clearly that nationalism endures. Four things, it seems, can do not to root merely than a fight. But it's a double-edged sword.

Nationalism can be a good thing, as demonstrated by how Filipinos, fired by their ideals, succeeded in kicking out the Spanish, the Japanese, and the American. In necessary was nationalism that fired and his generation out the many obstacles in order to restore inhabitants of our land to which who did not think of themselves as belonging to one "nation." Historians have pointed out that the concept of "Filipino," like so many other national identities would wide, is a modern invention constructed for practical purposes. Across the globe, colonized peoples rose against their colonial masters, inspired by a collective desire to be free. In such instances, nationalism has been a force for good. By dispelling the myth that some people are intrinsically superior, leading those who are persecuted inferior to question their subordination; by compelling us to look at those who are part of our imagined community as equals and therefore deserving of solidarity and respect; by convincing us that together we can do more than we ever could on our own; by convincing us that we can't otherwise achieve on our own, nationalism can bring out the best in us.

But, mixed with racism and discrimination, nationalism can also bring out the worst in us. The European colonists, convinced that they were bringing God's light to the New World, declared that the Indios of the Americas, the Native, believing themselves to be the superior race, exterminated over 90 million Jews. Turkish nationalists annihilated over a million Armenians. Closer to home, Indonesian nationalists justified the taking of West Papua and Timor. That nationalists have made only that Israel-Wailers will have no country of their own.

And right here at home, nationalism has been mobilized to justify the continuing colonization of the Moro people and the indigenous peoples in Mindanao. It has been invoked by those seeking an ideological cover with which to wrap their control, interests, and has given those that they notice to kill for them a sheen of "patriotism" and "love of country."

The kind of nationalism has been the first refuge of politicians eager to make prejudice in exchange for votes of those threatened with losing a portion of their vast fiefdoms, of those whose careers depend on defending the status quo, of those like Teodoro Locsin whose justification for keeping Moros colonized reminds us of the Spaniards' ex nation and humiliation and suffering of self-proclaimed superiors. All those who, while recognizing the historical injustices committed against Moros, nevertheless insist on giving them no other recourse but to be part of the "Filipino family." (But who would want to be part of a family in which some favorites seek to kill you and throw you out of your own house?)

And nationalism is of course not the preserve of the dominant group. Among the Moros, oppressively nationalism is also the refuge of those elites who are eager to take over the lands grabbed by Filipino landlords so that they themselves can oppress their own people. They will use the freedom they seek to deprive others of their freedom.

Nationalism is a bad thing when it forces us to see those who do not belong to our "nation"—or who do not wish to belong despite our wanting them to do—as "others" whom it makes those who do belong feel superior to those who don't, and when it becomes a justification for depriving those who don't belong to us the rights we claim for ourselves, like their consciences and their own freedom.

By rewriting false distinctions, nationalism blinds us to the real boundaries that divide people. Who do poor landless Christian migrants in Mindanao have more in common with, the poor landless Moros or the Christian landlords like the Orbits and the colleagues? With settlers do the landless Moros have more affinity than fellow Moros or their fellow landlords? And yet, it is the landless Filipinos who are invited to kill their fellow landless Moros so that the Orbits and the colleagues can keep their lands. And it has often been the rich, landed Moros who have been the first to sell out to the fight for freedom.

In the face of destructive nationalism, we need to overcome the liberating kind of nationalism that seeks to free instead of oppress, that seeks equality instead of hierarchy, that seeks solidarity instead of war. This kind of nationalism recognizes that freedom should be universal, that so-called national differences are constructed by our common humanity, that boundaries are imaginary but power relations are real. And if good nationalism becomes only a defensive reaction in the face of domination, then its ultimate aim is to make itself unnecessary. It would without colonialism is a world that has no need for nationalism.

And in the past, nationalist movements took on the full might of empires. Manny Pacquiao proved yet again that it is possible to overcome the odds, to prevail over those who are much bigger than us. That he is "one of us" is not a cause for automatic allegiance, only added proof that we who, like him, have been made to feel small are no less capable.

Herbert Docena, 27, is former editor in chief of the Philippine Collegian, works as a policy activist.

YOUNG BLOOD

Herbert Docena

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their views on current issues? We welcome contributions from the country something and below.—Ed.

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Herbert Docena, 27, is former editor in chief of the Philippine Collegian, works as a policy activist.

Bishops repudiated

COMMENTARY

Dennis Murphy

WHEN CONGRESS VOTES TO EXTEND LAME solaris, but someone to death, namely, the power to renew lapsed franchises to commercial land, the bishops outside the human know they had lost badly Leonardo Montemayor, a former member of the House of Representatives and official of the Federation of Free Farmers, said, "The defeat marked the end of all the dreams of all the farmers."

The Catholic bishops' defeat in Congress before had they invested so much effort in a cause of the past, only to see their teaching authority and political influence overwhelmingly repudiated by Congress.

The bishops had done as much as could reasonably be expected in support of the farmers. Some 70 bishops signed a statement backing the extension of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program with reforms. Disclaimer of the rule Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales, Cardinal Ricardo Vidal of Cebu, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, and Bishop Broderick Pabillo were again asking Congress to extend CARP with reforms. Eight bishops joined the farmers' hunger strike.

I don't think people who were there will soon forget Cardinal Rosales sitting in a makeshift tent outside the Batasan with the defeated farmers and Bengzon workers and looking just so sad and weary as they were.

The overwhelming rejection by Congress of land reform, which is central to the Church's social teachings, must trouble the bishops and they may well wonder who will happen to similar issues when they refuse to act, human reproduction, if they are put to a vote.

What will the bishops do? Will they withdraw from such controversial issues as land reform or will they push ahead? If they abandon or lessen their engagement in the human rights struggle, they will be seen as retreating in the face of adversity in time of trouble. If they push ahead, they may very well fall again. However, it is also possible that they and everyone else involved in the struggle for human rights may learn from the recent sad experience and find more effective ways to achieve their goals.

It is clear that solutions to the major social problems require a political consensus in favor of the poor among the members of Congress. Legislators listen to those who can help them in this task: ideologies, lobbyist and all human rights advocates can play a vital role in gathering people, helping them to organize to voice their problems, to think clearly at election time, and to do this in a coordinated way throughout the country.

How in the concrete can the bishops help create this consensus among the people?

There are degrees of involvement possible. The first degree, to which the Church is a main actor and the poor maker, can be in the formation of the Basic Christian Communities or their localized Community as the Board Church did in the 1970s and 1980s.

The foundations of Pakikibo Tulodbuhayan (PT), Lola da Silva's party in Brazil, are seen is formed by some of its founding members. In in the Basic Christian Community movements of the 1960s to 1970s. Almost all the main membership of the PT, which is now the largest party, were members of the movement. The organizing culture of the PT was, therefore, basically that of BCCs which elevated listening, respect for others and compromise, rather than ideological hard-lining. It helped, we were told, that the senior bishop involved was a Franciscan and a pastor. There were tens of thousands of BCCs in Brazil in those years. Can the Philippine Church expand the numbers of its BECs, deepen their appreciation of human rights issues and the need to link with other groups to make lots of national action, especially during elections?

The second degree of involvement for the Church is to join or similar movements, such as organizations of the farmers. The Church can support those groups, but it is not to the type of the role. The Federation of Free Farmers was such a group. The main movement for land reform in the PH was a 30-day live-in seminars, that was most often given with the help of the priest-chaplains, and even, used around the Church's social teaching. On the eve of martial law, the FFF claimed 300,000 members. The movement had its flaws, but in those years it was the best hope for the farmers.

The Church may also help groups not so closely linked with the Church. Usually such groups are required by the Church to be non-violent and democratic.

The third degree of involvement is in the support of particular candidates and parties. This step may be farthest from the Church's normal guidelines. Ordinarily the Church is advised to avoid partisan politics. However, desperate times call for desperate solutions. Maybe the Church is called to be more active in a partisan fashion, especially when the poor have no party and the entrenched establishment opposes the road to justice and prosperity.

Noel y Pichon and Eric Marcelino of Ang Kapatiran have just published Pamayan to a New Philippines which explains their party's goals and strategies. Ang Kapatiran is a new political party. Ang Kapatiran can be one ally of the bishops if they decide to be more politically involved. Ang Kapatiran believes strongly in the importance of the lay people in political matters and in the necessity for a party platform that expresses exactly what the group stands for.

Dennis Murphy works with the Tribal Peer Assistance. Also e-mail address is spm@pldtdsl.net.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in, if applicable. Do not insert your e-holding and the company you work with. Lisa will delete to thoughtful should not have been previously published.

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MMDA insensitive to disabled

I AM A PARAPLEGIC WHO USES to ride every day. I now leave my house only when I walk with the aid of two canes. Since mobility is a problem, I am brought to the office via my friend the early 1990s, way before Bayani Fernando became Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chairman. I have sought exemption from the wouldn't-bother-riding-as-it-is difficult list and so commence responsibility during the lotto season.

Every quarter, I am issued a UVVRP Certificate of Exemption which I pay P100. I renew this exemption every three months.

Last Jan. 8, I followed up my request for the renewal of my exemption for the period January to March 2009 with MMDA personnel Sylvia Asuncion as I normally do every quarter. Unfortunately, the exemption was unavailable and I was advised to feel sentiment, MD. dized.

I informed Mildred of my predicament but to my dismay she told me that no exemptions were yet available as the signatories had not had the time to sign any of the renewals.

Worried about being apprehended on my number-coding day, I inquired if it was possible for me to consider the MMDA traffic enforcers that I had a pending request for coding exemption. They would always cadre the main office to verify my claims.

Mildred's reply was sure "Ay hindi po, mahirap po kasi talaga. Walang kaming mapagpirmahan dito."

But I am handicapped, physically disabled, I told her. To which she said, "Eh di mag-taxi kayo."

I had no option to feel again that as a cripple, it was difficult for me to stand on a street corner, propped up by two canes, in the rain, and on flag down a taxi during rush hour.

"Wala ka kasing magagawa," she said and that was the end of the conversation. There was no effort on her part to assuage my fear of being apprehended for most of them, as no assurance me that my exemption would be forthcoming.

The MMDA is a government agency funded by taxpayers' money. Is this the way they are supposed to serve the public?

Why even offer an exemption as the physically challenged if they don't care what happens to them? Why does Fernando think he can be the nation's presidentiable when he can't even teach his personnel basic courtesy and concern for the weaker section of society?

I sure worked for the government—as subsecretary for the Department of Education and as a media specialist for the National Shelter Program. I know for a fact that as a government employee, your political standing is irrelevant while you're in public service.

This person under the Asuncio wording for the MMDA was definitely not given the proper orientation or briefed by MMDA chief Bayani Fernando on the importance of courtesy to the people they have promised to serve.

Public service is public trust. How can you entrust the future of the country to someone who cannot connect the people under him?

—TERESITA VALDEZ,
valdez@pacific.net.ph

MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TIE-BID

Marcelino: Man of great courage

MAJ. FERDINAND MARCELINO IS a breath of fresh air in the stinking corrupt atmosphere prevailing in the country today. With his courage and incorruptible quality, he has earned the admiration and trust of the beleaguered Filipino people. He is indeed a man gift to our country and a blessing to the military whose tarnished reputation needs to be desired.

Kudos to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and those in the front line prosecution and justice Philippines Bureau. They ought to be exposed for what they are and should hang their heads in shame.

—CAESARIA ANN ACEDERA,
20 Green St.,
Hi-Village, Marikina City

LETTERS

They should fight on top of Megiddo

I SAW A HORRIFYING IMAGE ON the front page of the Inquirer: a row of killed children laid down on a road in Gaza, and I was deeply distressed. Later, I was astonished by a line from John Donne, "When someone dies, a part of me dies."

When a child dies in a war, a part of our humanity dies, too. With this thought, I would like to make a humble proposal.

But before that, we should look at this war not as a war between two peoples. A fine line of distinction must be drawn between the Jews and their leaders, between Hamas and the Palestinians between the innocent civilians and the political-military mannequins who clash businessmen scheme.

When fought the world in World War II was not the majority of the German people represented by the likes of Goebbels, Rosenberg, Heinrich Himmler, Eichmann, Hitler and the Nazis. The Palestinians and the Jews are not people of old civilizations uncannily older than Filipino civilization and even American civilization. They too, are peoples who uniquely believe in the concept of heaven or an after-life.

Considering the above, I humbly suggest that Hamas, Ehud Olmert, Tzipi Livni and Barak, the Knesset, the Pentagon and the bomb manufacturers take their fight on Mt. Megiddo. There, no children and innocent civilians would be caught in the crossfire. I suggest further that they prohibit themselves from using guns and cannons. They should use dagger, for the sake purpose of discrediting as sword.

Then, we, neither interested nor concerned that 1,000,000 people would be attending the rally, we hoped for a minimum of 10,000, which was the second amendment we got on Dec. 12.

Second, the logistics for the rally were secured by contributions in cash and in kind from the participating groups. As in past rallies at Ayala Avenue, these monies were used exclusively for rally expenditures, and the disbursement of those funds is open to scrutiny by the same donors.

Finally, the modest amounts gave some members host the to fund figures cited by Gutierrez.

What's that 600 he can put more coins from? Perhaps from figures blackmailing agenda for pro-GMA rallies? After all, having completely worked closely with Malacañang's Office for External Affairs, and at one of the "mobilizer" of pro-EDSA rallies, Gutierrez would most likely be comfortable with such secretive and capacities.

We also understand the effort he is associated with apparently specialists in fabricating intrigues with which to discredit opposition groups. Hence, the top rest for the last time we will hear from him or his fabricating "operators." He can now assured though that the rally will continue to be held for as long as Charter change and term extensions remain on Malacañang's agenda.

—DENNIS GARIN,
Barrio Sun, 12 rally-organizers,
barrilsun@gmail.com

Rizal being honored for martyrdom

Regarding the article "Women first in head of Pink Filipino" by Sonny Lim Dayanara, 12/30/08), why was Binibining (...Sikwate Pambansa) of PBC Laguna not mentioned? She contributed in the house of Gloria Bagtadato, a friend of Rizal.

Finally, there are some days on the main floor of the Rizal Memorial to be Laguna that are broken and tend to be repaired or re-placed. I noticed them the day the wreath laying ceremony during this year's Rizal Day celebration.

—LEOPOLD S.
SAN SALVADOR, SALTA.,
Philippine-Ironmal Fraternity,
Manila

Cha-cha ploy to trigger more rallies

IN THE DEC. 16, 2008 OPINION section of the Inquirer, a certain Leonard Kirk Galamay wrote that the Dec. 12 Ayala Avenue rally against Charter change served no real purpose, since the idea of a Constituent Assembly was already dead in the water. He also went on to assert the public that Malacañang has been sincere in using that President Macapagal-Arroyo would veto any new constituent proposal.

Contrary to Galamay's claim, we believe that the Dec. 12 rally was both urgent and necessary. People came out simply because no one wants and believes the statements of the Palace and its allies against term extension—that will be so only in the short term, that is, when the Cha-cha proposal comes to vote in the House of Representatives, while the Palace remains silent even as its damp allies extraordinarily pursue Cha-cha.

Galamay also said that the organizers spent P5 million or P10 million for a rally that aimed to draw in 100,000 participants but which attracted only 15,000. This allegation implies that the organizers either engaged in wasteful spending or used funds and the gathering for some other purpose.

First, we marvel in Galamay's fixation of rally-organizers and definition of actual rally attendance figures, for the latest pronouncement of ubiquitous, for the latest pronouncement of ubiquitous, marching-as-many.

First, we neither announced nor announced that 100,000 people

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Across the NATION

Palafox slams 'environmental corruption'

Cagayan de Oro mining suspended; flash flood submerges 36 villages

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Mayor Constantino Jaraula has ordered the suspension of all mining operations here on Monday after one person died and seven others remained missing when flash flood displaced about 30,000 people in 36 villages on Saturday.

But City Councilor Acmac, chair of the environment committee, told the Inquirer that mining operations had stopped even before Jaraula's order.

The operations complained that they had to cease ... because of the rain," Acmac said.

Mining blamed

Mining, quarrying and logging in Lumo have been blamed for the flooding.

Michael Asangen, 18, died after a landslide buried his house in Sitio Pomalibi, Barangay Dagatpan.

Rescuers on Monday failed to find an elderly man, children and four male adults.

Acmac said water-dump flooding in the main thoroughfares was due to runoffs in creeks and canals that could not discharge water to the river and the sea.

Abandon houses

The city government urged residents living along the rivers to immediately flee their houses.

Almost all of the 3,000 people on the three islets in the middle of the Cagayan River were forcibly evacuated.

Jaraula told the Inquirer that mini-dam projects in the streams and creeks would be built to hold the water for hours if heavy rains in the Mt. Kitanglad Range and other mountains occurred.

Ban on conversion

The city would also impose a ban on the conversion of forest lands into farms, he said.

On Monday, the city council passed a resolution asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to order a total log ban in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao that would affect the downstream cities like Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City and even Lanao del Norte.

In Iligan City the Office of Civil Defense in Northern Mindanao, said Darle Ompoc, 42, was buried alive in a landslide on Sunday.

Bridge impassable

In Opol town, the boundary of Cagayan de Oro and Misamis Oriental, the Department of Public Works and Highways declared a major bridge impassable, stranding hundreds of passengers and cutting off delivery of goods to and from the city.

The bridge connects Cagayan de Oro to Iligan and the rest of Misamis Oriental. Jovian Canal-Albaster and Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, Inquirer Mindanao

By Robert Gonzaga
Inquirer Central Luzon

OLONGAPO CITY—THE architect who withdrew from a $120-million casino-hotel project at the Subic Bay Freeport in protest of tree-cutting there resurfaced on Saturday to talk with local community and continue his crusade against "environmental corruption."

"We just tried to save those trees and we opened a can of worms of corruption. I'm just here to tell the truth—for God, for our country, for planet earth and future generations," Felino Palafox Jr, told religious leaders, environmental advocates, residents and students.

He was referring to plans of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), Grand Utopia Inc., to cut or transfer trees so it could build a casino-hotel in a forested patch inside the free port.

Speaking at the Columban College here, Palafox said a letter from concerned employees of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority in July last year alerted him about the plan to cut trees in the project site.

Palafox said he was tapped by Fernando, the boss that made the basic design of the casino-hotel, as local architect and environmental planner. "He realized that the reason they [Fernando] got to it so fast could use my name and my license for their designs," he said.

At that time, Palafox told his staff that it was the firm's choice to accept $1 million and destroy the trees. "But the field of architecture is a noble profession, if we accept that, I told them, then we are no better than prostitutes," he said.

In November, Palafox quit Grand Utopia over the cutting of more than 100 trees.

He said BCDA officials had also threatened to sue him for disclosing an anomalous arrangement by a member of the agency's bids and awards committee to remove him with the port's master development plan project.

"I just wanted to save the trees, not to destroy other people's reputation," he said. "But now, I have death threats from corrupt officials of the BCDA. They are trying to scare me and discredit me so that when I am called by the Senate to testify, there'll still no longer have any credibility."

Sen. Pia Cayetano asked Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, chair of the Senate committee on constitution, to conduct an inquiry on the plan to cut trees in the casino-hotel site.

Palafox said BCDA officials also gave mixed signals to the public and investors on the project. He referred to varying accounts of BCDA officials on the number and sizes of trees in the area and the supposed corruption involving SBMA officials whom he did not name.

"There is really a grand deception here. Some people in the SBMA told me that there is corruption here. But Subic belongs to all Filipinos and not to a few corrupt SBMA officials," he said.

PALAFOX

A group led by the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) joined the protest rally on Saturday and was met by bruises and SBMA officials.

"Granting that the DENR [Department of Environment and Natural Resources] has already revoked or suspended their authority to issue ECC and other permits as required by environmental laws, I think the DENR's review, study and recommendations will be very crucial in the next days," said Fr. Jarvis Rodrix, AMRSP executive director.

"We will wait and monitor the result of the DENR review of the site and all the project. So far we have seen that the trees are still standing, thank God. I think that's the result of the appeal that has been made," Rodrix said.

12 boat passengers missing in Leyte, Samar

By Jose A. Gabieza and Rachel F. Arnaiz
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—SEVEN PASSENGERS, including a 7-year-old girl, on board a motorized banca, and five fishermen were declared missing in separate incidents in Leyte and in two Samar provinces.

The most spectacular of the 998 lingering failed to return home after sailing from Cabucs, Daram Island on Saturday afternoon.

They were headed for Sabtan Island, only 20 miles from Cabucs, according to a report of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in Eastern Visayas.

Missing were Aileen Sarmiz, 33; Teresa Garado, 28; Alfonso Gadar, 50; Sofa Merriza, 38; Bernardo Bermudo, 50; Jose Tejadeza, 45, and Maria Princess Tejadeza, 7.

Their relatives reported their disappearance on Sunday, a Coast Guard report said.

Coast Guard personnel scoured the seas but failed to find the boat or its passengers.

Bad weather following heavy rain and strong winds could be the reason the passengers failed to arrive at Sabtan, said Senior Chief Petty Officer Roman Aujo of the regional Coast Guard.

In Northern Samar, three fishermen from the coastal town of Palapag sailed on Jan. 8 and have not returned since, according to Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council chief Jessamin Unay Jr.

He identified the fishermen as Mark Alcazar, Arjo Nacare and Marlon Nacare, all of Barangay Magsaysay, Palapag.

Two other fishermen—Arnold Abella, 50 and Bugsito Ardolenda, 61,— were missing in Substa, Leyte.

Northern Samar remains under a state of calamity amid conditions same that have brought floods to various parts of the province since December.

The OCD reported that 7,307 families or 35,677 people were evacuated.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ COTABATO CITY

Bomb lobbed on banker's home

UNIDENTIFIED men tossed a hand grenade inside the house of the manager of Land Bank of the Philippines Sunday night. City police chief Senior Supt. Wilfer Sangona said Ronald Sabbad, LBP–Kidapawan City branch manager, suffered shrapnel injuries after two men riding in tandem on a motorbike lobbed a hand grenade in front of his house at about 9 p.m. The suspects fled, Sangona said.

Erwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

■ CITY OF SAN FERNANDO

Rebel killed in clash

A LEADER of a group of communist rebels in Pampanga was killed in a clash with soldiers and policemen in Lubao town on Friday. Col. Jose Mabanta, chief of the 703rd Infantry Brigade, said Ariel Limones, alias Ka Kim, head of government forces on the run, was killed in a shootout in Barangay San Antonio.

Mabanta said Limones, 40, served as head of the provincial military department of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan and Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines.

Fenetha Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon

■ BORAS CITY

Fantilanan: 62

JUDGE Claudio Fantilanan of the Capiz Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 18 died of cancer on Jan. 9. He was 62.

Lawyer Arsenio Andrade Salgado, RTC-18 clerk of court, said the judge's son Ritani Fantilanan, has informed them at about 11 a.m. that his father died at the Philippine General Hospital in Manila.

Fantilanan, of Angas Cuartero, Capiz was married to Rachel, a retired school principal. They have seven children.

Antipa B. Collao, Inquirer Visayas

■ LAGUNA

Trader faces guns raps

POLICE seized two guns and assorted ammunitions from a trader of SVDs and VSDs in a shabu at the Imhar hotel plaza in Laguna at 5 p.m. Wednesday.

A .45-caliber pistol, four magazines and 68 ammunitions, a magnum .22 pistol and 13 ammunitions were confiscated from the trader identified as Anacy Manalo.

Marnie Cleto, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Air strikes prevent Maguindanao folk from going home, say peace groups

By Mark B. Medina
Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—MORTAR SHELLING and air strikes by the military on suspected lairs of Moro rebels under Ameril Ombra Kato in Maguindanao have kept displaced civilians from returning to their places of origin, concerned groups told Deputy Speaker Simeon Datumanong in a dialogue last week.

The evacuees have "increasingly become dependent" on relief aid for livelihood in the absence of bold government plans for community rehabilitation, said Unalmed Alim, chair of the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society Organizations (CBCSO). It is cited reports by local network groups of the European Union.

The CBCSO is working with peace advocates and Christian members to "stop the war" through continuing talks with various sectors, including the military.

Kato, the prime target of the military operations, has denied in a video statement that his group burned down the Notre Dame of North Cotabato and the San Isidro chapel in Midsayap town.

Two other MILF leaders—Abdullah Macapaar, alias Commander Bravo, and Aliat Ibrahim—were being hunted following reports that their groups killed civilians on Aug. 31. In Datumanong and Bangsamoro leaders led Moro leaders in a campaign to allow the aborted signing of a proposed Bangsamoro homeland between the government and the MILF.

Alim said local peace consultations had indicated that it was "next to impossible" for him to leave the scene of military operations, especially in Maguindanao, "because he is from the place." Kato's family owns a parcel of land in the province, Datumanong said.

The armed conflict displaced some 611,000 people in Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, North Cotabato and Maguindanao last year. Gov. Mahamy of the Muslim Lanao Center said, around 80,000 have decided to stay in the evacuation centers in Saya Piang town out of fear of returning to their villages.

Alim said there were not as many atrocities resulting from military operations against Bravo and Macapaar in Lanao del Sur compared to those in Maguindanao.

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– Dr. Michael M. Tarun, President, M.U. Ayo Executive Inc.

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Marieth Colango - 840.1742

SPORTS

3 PBL tailenders resume q'final drives

Welcoat	5	1
Magnolia	5	1
Purefoods	4	2
Sta. Lucia	3	3
Alaska	3	3
Sunsilk Dfa	3	3
Red Bull Barang	2	4
Mobiline	1	5

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
11 a.m.—Shell vs Welcoat
4 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Sunsilk Dfa

By Jeannine W. Pupo

THE THREAT OF AN EARLY EXIT IS DRAWing Dee Brun out of Phoenix.

And coach Cadet Tan expects his Gasoline to dig deep some or they fight for survival against the Bacchus Energy Watchers in the PBL PC Five Limelumen Cup today at the Emilio Aguinaldo College gym in Manila.

"We must keep looking over our shoulder, we have to check our own feet," said Tan. "We have to make sure our heads are screwed on right, that we're ... still focused on our game."

Bolstered by two straight victories, the Generic aim to pick up one more win against the Warriors at 2 p.m. in remain in contention for a quarterfinal berth.

Ranger Ring and Tayuna Gin, both just a win ahead of Phoenix, collide at 4 p.m. for the right to also sing to the quarterfinal race.

"This will test our true strength and character," said Tayuna Gin mentor Ariel Vanguardia.

The Sparks, although nursing fifth at 4-6, still need to win their last two games to stay ahead of three other teams fighting for the last three quarterfinal slots.

As 4-7, the Summers face a similar scenario as coach Allan Gregorio's crew—who won seven straight entering Honor Detail, Abby Santos, Chiel Illan and Jason Ballesteros respectively—wrap up its elimination campaign today.

Bamboo already secured the first quarterfinal berth along with the twice-to-beat bonus.

Harbour Centre (8-2) and Magnolia (7-3), meanwhile, advanced to the semifinals ahead of everyone else.

The Greenies have enough assurance in the Warriors, who retained the five-time champion Sunday Pure 79-75, three days ago.

"We're still here to win," said coach Lawrence Chongson after the Warriors turned their campaign around with four straight wins.

The Sparks revived their cool-bid with a 93-73 clamping of Magnolia last Thursday.

Alvarez: BK part of Lina group like Air21

By Cedrik F. Tupaz

THE BALL IS NOW IN THE PBA'S HANDS AS far as Air21's name change to Burger King is concerned.

Air21 yesterday formalized its application to change the team name to Burger King for the 2005 Fiesta Conference which begins Feb. 28.

Lito Alvarez, Air21's representative to the PBA board of governors, submitted documents to league commissioner Sonny Barrios showing that Burger King is part of the Lina Group of companies, which also owns Air21.

One of the supporting documents submitted by Alvarez was Air21's January 2002 letter to the late former commissioner Jun Bernardino, informing him of the franchise's transfer to a holding firm, Lina Holdings Corporation.

The franchise entered the league in 2002 without a holding firm, but under Air21 INC.

"I'm confident that we will be able to get the PBA's nod," Alvarez, who is also the PBA board vice chair, said. "Our papers are in order. But we still just have to go through the process."

Air21 was earlier required to show proof that owner Piero Lina meets the criteria of having P25 ownership of Burger King.

Lina reportedly owns a 60 percent stake in the limited chain with telecommunications magnate Manny V. Pangilinan, who also owns Talk 'N' Text, controlling 15 percent of stocks.

Wanting to act with dispatch on the matter, Barrios said he has forwarded the documents to PBA legal counsel Melvin Mendoza, who will study whether Air21's name change can be allowed without a league fee.

PBA board chair Joaquin "Billo-o" Alunan is also hoping for a quick resolution of the issue.

"Ish might finish the same within the week," said Billo. "There might not be a need to wait if the Air21 papers are in order."

Manager Chua quitting RP team

Meanwhile, Red Bull manager Tony Chua may be leaving the all-pro national team as team manager in the wake of coach Eng Guiao's resignation from the Barako.

Sources close to Chua yesterday said the Red Bull manager could announce his resignation by the next few days.

Chua has been in the forefront of talks with Hidalgo, one of the respective sponsors of the RP team that is set to see action in the 15th Asia Championships in Chiba in August.

Manny wants 65-35 purse deal vs Hatton

By Ray Luarca

THERE WILL BE NO EQUAL SHARING OF the total prize purse and revenues when Manny Pacquiao tangles with British "Hitman" Ricky Hatton on May 2.

Team Pacquiao is insisting on a 65-35 percent revenue deal in favor of the Filipino ring superstar—or at least 60-40.

If the Hatton camp is not agreeable to this deal, Team Pacquiao could look the British hitter for a new opponent willing to agree to the Gen. Santos City southpaw's terms.

"It's time for Manny to call the shots," Wakso Salud, a close friend and confidante of Pacquiao, told the boxscene on the phone yesterday. "After all, he's the world's undisputed best pound-for-pound fighter now."

Salud said Pacquiao deserves to get the same deal Oscar De La Hoya (65-35 percent) received when the 30-time world champion fought and lost to the Filipino in their Vegas bloody showdown last Dec. 4 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Pacquiao's lawyer-lawmaker "Gloria" Garci hinted in a television interview also yesterday that the fighter is willing to settle for a 60-40 sharing scheme for the Hatton bout, which has already been slated in Las Vegas.

After spending two weeks with wife Jinkee, children Michael, Emmanuel Jr., Mary Divine Grace and newborn Queen Elizabeth, at their Pinoy's mansion in Hollywood, Pacquiao returned to Manila early yesterday morning.

Jinkee and the baby now left behind in Los Angeles but will follow soon, according to Pacquiao, who took reconnecting flight to Gen. Santos City.

The 30-year-old Pacquiao, acclaimed by Ring Magazine and other boxing savvy giving Salud as the 2004 Fighter of the Year, intends to hold on to his WBC super featherweight crown and to bloody previous accomplishments.

Earlier reports said Pacquiao would play for his team, Genlite MB when the Warriors take on the Rain Busters in the opening of the 2005 Liga Filipinas in Gen. Santos on Jan. 16.

According to Salud, Pacquiao will also grace the amateur boxing summit slated Jan. 17 in Rancho City.

If Pacquiao flames pushes through as scheduled, Salud said Pacquiao will start training early in March at the Wild Card Gym in Hollywood.

PACQUIAO'S CALL The world's undisputed pound-for-pound king deserves to fight on his own terms, says confidante Wakso Salud.

Rivas: Cycling dispute may reach courts

By Jane Manaros

RIVAS: Versus POC

THE INTEGRATED Cycling Federation of the Philippines (ISkl Cycling) will take legal action against the Philippine Olympic Committee if the latter refuses to recognize the federation's new set of officers to be elected on Friday.

PhilCycling vice president Baquio Rivas yesterday said the legitimate members of the PhilCycling board will give the POC a ten-day ultimatum to withdraw from another group.

Rivas said the rival group, which owns the same favorites and Exchange Commission-registered name of the federation, does not enjoy the blessings of the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), the international federation for the sport.

Led by former national cyclist Rolando Hao, the faction held an election last month and has applied for POC recognition.

"We will not allow them (other group) to take over the affairs of the PhilCycling," said Rivas, a former national rider and two-time Tour of Luzon champion.

"They are not members of the federation and they refused to get a sanction from the PhilCycling in their tournaments."

POC spokesperson Jove Benaventos said the Olympic body is not sending an observer in the Jan. 16 polls, where Tagaytay Mayor Antonio Tolentino and Hadrian Cenizo owner Mikee Romero are vying for key positions.

Benaventos said the POC would form a committee headed by athletics chief Go Teng Kok and himself to determine the legitimate set of officers of the body.

PhilCycling claims to have the support of at least 100 cycling clubs nationwide while Hao's group said it has 60 under its wings.

POC must rule now on PhilCycling polls

BARE EYE

Alexis Trinidad

Due to the urgent call for nation-to-a-
nonsline non-traveling, the subsidiary-
jumper-to-Nicky Hatton's-bonus-against
Manny Pacquiao will be passed on
Thursday to pho-wip to this sport.—Ed.

* * *

THERE ARE TWO GROUPS CLAIMing leadership in the national cycling association called the Philippine Olympic Committee is hard-pressed to make an immediate ruling to end the squabble.

One group calling itself the "new set of officers of PhilCycling" yesterday announced the staging of a National Open championship, its first in five years, on Jan. 15 and 16 in Tagaytay City and the Antonio Subdivision in Quezon City.

Here in the national cycling pool will be at stake in the two competitions, while an election of officers will reportedly be held in conjunction with the championship.

* * *

Another group, which held an assembly and election of officers in compliance with the deadline set in the PhilCycling charter, is busy laying the groundwork for talent discovery junior grassroots races all over the country and a National Open series to pick candidates to the Laos Southeast Asian Games.

"How can they call themselves the new PhilCycling officers when they've not held an election yet? If they own do, it would already be a violation of the national cycling charter," said lawyer Samuel Estrella, in the forefront of fights for sportsmen in the national Olympic hierarchy.

* * *

"In parallel. How can the Lina group hold events when they're not even chosen their new set of officers?" asked Kaizen (see-thin Tom) champion Jean Garcia Jr. "So far as I am concerned, this group is illegitimate."

Garcia said he will confer with former national cyclist Rolando Hao, who was elected PhilCycling president in an election held at the Amoranto Sports Complex last Dec. 12, to inform him of support from former national cycling associates in Bagumbayan.

It was reported that among the frontrunners in the projected election of cycling officers under outgoing PhilCycling president Bert Lina are Tagaytay Mayor Abraham Tolentino, Hadrian Cenizo owner Mikee Romero and Davao City Councilor Oscar Rodriguez.

* * *

However, athletics president Go Teng Kok, special assistant to the POC president, said he honestly doubted the legitimacy of the scheduled Jan. 16 cycling polls.

"I was at the Amoranto Sports Complex on Dec. 12 and the election of officers by the Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines...presided over by Chair Lor Cruz, the only recognized body by the by-laws of the federation," he said.

Go told Inquirer that he will recommend to the POC Executive Board the recognition of the new set of PhilCycling officers, led by Rivas, who were elected to their posts on Dec. 12.

"At their legal counsel, I care to it that Rivas's group complied with all the requirements of the POC and with their ISSPP own bylaws," Jimmie said. "SSAs should adhere to the rule of law, nothing less, nothing more, nothing else."

NCA World Slasher derby blasts off at Ynares today

A CRACK FOREIGN FIELD LED BY THE United States' three-time national champion Rockwell and James Campbell, Tony Cox and Jim Fiasco and previous Mickey and Ty Tolliver are also among the favorites.

CLASS REFUGEES: Jose Medina, Bernardo, California's Larry Rubillo, Larry Whitehead, Jim Rockwell, Sandiego, Steve Earl Bernard, Kentucky's Dennis Vickerson, Manny Arriaga and Wayne Sandoval, San Francisco Joe Sanford, Jim Tan, Ricky Pineda, Manuel Lopez, Jay Gallardo, Jose Miguel Mercado, Ramon Bautista, Nonie Ray, Chanel Simpson, Bayan Jones Jose Jr., Eddie Martin, Gary Zamudio, Philip Dizon-Juan, Dante Pineda, Tony Gabriel, Jose and Rodney Mendoza, Sandoy Ty, Edwin Abella, Alfonso Alejandro, Ray Dulay, Raul Gumbocan, Alan Tan, Rudy Flores, Wendy Valentine, Miguel Luis, Claudio Gaddala, Henry Yu, Jun and Anthony Mananggit, Joel Reyes, Rhoey Llanan, Butch Hidalgo, Edgar Santos, Alex and Jerry Escalona, Art Fernando, Gerry Avelino, Efren Cardoz, Jun Tupaz, Ray Arbolado, Pat Salcedo, Manny Santos, Bernard Gomez, Oreo Cardoz, Jun and Rudy Mendoza, Jun de Ocampo, Tom Sevilla, Jaime Ty, Benjie Lim, Jaime Allan Cabeo Santos, Danny Sison, Paul Gaudier, Mario Villarosa, Dr. Jo Guzman, Louie Martinez, Ramon Medina, Rudy Salazar, Jimmy Ang, Ty Mendoza, Johnny Ang, G. Santos, S. Maloly, Butch Hidalgo, Ray Ramirez, Jun Santiago and Jesse Robillo.

EMINENT American cracker Larry Whitehead (left) of Tennessee and top local campaigner Ray de Roca pin their prized war birds during yesterday's official launch of the NCA World Championship Derby at the Edsa Shangri-La. Also in photo are Mickey and Ty Tolliver and the Sagauon Competition Committee.

'Abe' could seal the deal

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Ser Saruwatari

IT WAS ABOUT 40 hour before flight time for Team Pacquiao when Chino Trinidad and I entered Sarangani Congressman Manny Pacquiao's dressing room at the Araneta Coliseum.

Chino was going to call the main event of the Todaysports in the "Pay Per View" card for Mike Arroyo and wanted to check on Congressman's preparations for the fight against Ronnie Nicolo Alcano for the WBC International featherweight championship.

Inside, Alex Ariza (acting stable boss in substitute for Congressman, Director Carlo), and Lenny Rey Jose had everything they needed for the fights. Sandy outsiders said Jose came to start out but Congressman's trainer and pride at his personal request to come for pictures.

In this show as boss, Congressman became the new champion after Kenny Chino's victory via technical for the ninth round left.

* * *

"Abe" went 17 rather he began to pressured opponents in four rounders. Even then, the two persons was evident, reasoning from a seven-pound body that seemed to have longer days as other-talent's ability to make use against bigger.

There was no question he was matched to watch. The In This Corner boxing programs were careful he studied when Concepcion was on the card because a display of power was forthcoming.

To date, that power has emphasized a record of 29 wins and two draws against two loss. Seventeen of his triumphs, including the one against Ochoa, have come on KO.

* * *

Concepcion was winning up in front of a camera and strategizing about his journey to fulfill his boxing dreams. I told him it's a humble way making for his fight because he wants the main event.

"Hindi naman po, (Not really)," Concepcion said.

When he was still starting out as a four-rounder he didn't know where his next fight would be. Now he is accustomed to boxing fights at least every two to three months.

In the fight, Concepcion couldn't throw repeatedly with right uppercuts and straights. In the third round, Ochoa 6th down was something to his eye, prompting referee Bruce Idemudia to call for Initial Stream. There was a cut on his left eyelid, but the ring doctor allowed the fight to continue.

Mount, however, felt that the Ilonggo cutman did not handle the wound well between rounds and the adhesive didn't stick.

Concepcion's power there that Saturday night's weight to the fourth added to the frustration of the great Ilonggo.

At fight end, delighted supporters from Bacolod, Concepcion, where the fight fans inhabit a historic and cultural center of the province's town, made it nearly impossible to talk to the new champion in the hallway leading to the locker room.

I managed to sneak in when Concepcion handed to his family crying tears in thanks on his battered opponent. He revealed that he knew exactly what to do, even in the third round when it looked like the Ilonggo had been wounded.

* * *

Ian sealed home-ready talent title "Concepcion: The Next Inexplicable" given that the young fighter looks like the next bright star in Philippine boxing. His could-view will be the "Final Push" as his number given. Like Concepcion is usually-different, with his own unique style and gaits.

It's just great to know that Pacman has opened the road for Nonito Donaire to the next levels of Filipino boxing history. Concepcion's achievements, Pampilon's support, finally calling him Sixto Sinong in fact, Concepcion's fight shows that night were a gift from Pampilon.

When he was satisfied that Ochoa was all right, Concepcion raised and went out by a throng of well-wishers. He donate your fight better team soccer will soon likely be as crowded as he sometimes in business that Concepcion's coach and the third as month-to Filipino-boxing here.

Allen shines as Celtics halt slide

BOSTON Celtics' Rajon Rondo goes fouled by Toronto Raptors' Jerry Graham (right) during their NBA game in Toronto, Jan. 11.

TORONTO—JOEY ALLEN SCORED A SEASON-HIGH 30 POINTS, 19-12 Sing eight 3-pointers, as the Boston Celtics withstood a late Toronto rally to beat the Raptors, 94-88, on Sunday, snapping a four-game losing streak.

Allen, who made a career-high 10 3-pointers against Charlotte on April 11, 2002, finished 8-for-10 from 3-point range on Sunday, making his five in succession.

Rajon Rondo had 18 points and 11 assists and Kevin Garnett added 10 points and 11 rebounds. Paul Pierce had 11 points for Boston, which had four seven of nine coming in.

Andrea Bargnani led Toronto with 17 points while Chris Bosh and Jermaine Moon each had 13.

In San Antonio, Dwight Howard scored 24 points and season-Nelson had eight of his 22 in the final two minutes as Orlando snapped San Antonio's four-game winning streak, 105-99.

Hedo Turkoglu added 21 points for the Magic (20-6), who had split with the Boston Celtics for the Eastern Conference lead in victories. Orlando has won four straight and 13 of 15 games.

The Magic were 14-of-22 from 3-point territory.

Tony Parker scored 21 points for the Spurs (24-12), but he missed a pair of layups in the final two minutes as San Antonio closed the game by missing six of seven shots.

Lakers 106, Heat 101

At Los Angeles, Andrew Bynum scored a season-high 24 points, including a go-ahead follow shot with 18.5 seconds remaining, as Los Angeles beat Miami to become the first Western Conference team to reach 30 victories.

Kobe Bryant added 19 points and seven assists, Pau Gasol had 14 points and 10 rebounds to notch a career high, and Derek Fisher had 12 points and a season-high 11 assists for the Lakers (30-6), who won for the ninth time in 10 games.

Dwyane Wade led the Heat (19-17) with 37 points and nine rebounds, and rookie Michael Beasley scored 17 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter. AP

Complete results: Boston 94, Toronto 88; Philadelphia 103, Miami 98; Phoenix 102, LA Clippers 98; Orlando 105, San Antonio 99; Golden State 128, Indiana 117; Sacramento 95, Dallas 91; LA Lakers 106, Miami 101. Reuters

Ogilvy storms to 6-stroke victory in Mercedes golf

GEOFF Ogilvy: 10th PGA Tour title

KAPALUA, HAWAII—AUSTRALIAN Geoff Ogilvy recovered from a double bogey on the seventh to score a matching-par-to-win victory by six shots at the PGA Tour's season-opening Mercedes-Benz Championship on Sunday.

He ahead of the field overnight at the Kapalua Resort, Ogilvy had his lead briefly cut to one after he bogeyed four of the first eight holes before pulling away from the chasing pack.

He rolled in a 20-foot eagle putt at the par-five ninth to give himself much-needed breathing space and birdied five of the same nine holes en route to a five-under-par 68.

Ogilvy clinched his fifth PGA Tour title with a 29-under total of 268, finishing well ahead of Americans Chris Lane (6) (67) and Anthony Kim, who rugbied the last for a matching 67.

American Steve O'Hair fired a five-under 65, the lowest score of the day, to secure fourth place at 17-under.

"I've been traditionally a horrible starter on the West Coast and last year I missed my first three cuts," Ogilvy told reporters after earning the victorious check for $1.152 million.

"So to start the first week is really, really nice and it gives me a great feeling for the rest of the year.

"I had never had a six-shot lead before and that's quite an accomplishment, really."

Ogilvy finished six worse than eight in his last four starts, including a victory at the Australian PGA Championship four weeks ago. Reuters

Concepcion stops Kenyan in 5th round

By Cedrill P. Tupas

FILIPINO BOXING STAR BERSAMIN CONCEPCION wasn't a plan to the exuberant of the Manny Pacquiao-Ricky Hatton showdown on May 2 to celebrate his new status as WBC International featherweight champion.

The 26-year-old fighter from Vitas, Camarines, won the vacant WBC championship Sunday night with a fifth-round technical knockout of Kenny's Sands Ochoa to cap a big night for Filipino fighters in the fight card dubbed "Judgment in the Ring Fest" at the Araneta Coliseum.

Concepcion punished Ochoa with heavy right punches in the face and in the body, reducing the Kenyan to one cohesive, bloodied mess in the end.

Referee Bruce McTavish stopped the fight before the start of the sixth round on the recommendation of ringside physician Rodolfo Moreno as blood dripped from a cut just above the Kenyan's left eye.

Concepcion opened the one midway in the third round with a right straight. The Kenyan managed to stay on his feet despite Concepcion's sporadic bombardment, but his punches lacked zeal.

"I knew from the first round that I would control the fight," Concepcion, now 20-1-1 with 18 knockouts, said in Filipino. "I knew I could take his punches."

Concepcion's manager, Alex Ariza, said he hoped his world's performance will land him a shot in the May 2 card headlined by Pacquiao and Hatton.

"Definitely, we will accept it if they offer us a fight in the undercard," said Ariza.

If tickets not materialize, Ariza said he wants Concepcion to fight Mexico's Juan Ruiz in the last week of March or the first week of April in Manila.

In the main event, Pampanga's former OPBF and IBF light flyweight champion Kenny Bay Jaro scored a sensational first-round knockout of Thailand's Rodtee Sasanang in their scheduled 10-rounder.

Another Filipino, Denver Cuello, also made short work of Indonesian mini-mosquitoweight champion Yusuf Mansur, whose corner threw in the towel before the start of the second round.

Xavier dumps Hope five as Teng fires 52 points

By Ronnina S. Austria

FORMER NATIONAL Youth mainstay Jiovi Teng fired 52 points, outscoring the entire opposing team, as defending champion Xavier School routed past Hope Christian High School, 120-61, in the start of the 39th Philippine Basketball Association (PBTBA) over the weekend at the UNO High School gym.

Teng, last year's scoring champion and son of former San Miguel Beer cohorts Alvin, also grabbed 13 rebounds and banned five assists to hand Hope Christians its 10th straight defeat dating back to the 2008 edition.

Xavier's Jeff Chang-Yik Hoi is last year's final, is eyeing its eighth title in the annual tournament featuring teams from the country's Filipino-Chinese schools.

In other opening-day matches, host UNO High School upended 1-4-time champ Chiang Kai Shek, 87-82, and UE, Jade topped St. Stephen's, 68-67.

UNO's Ronald Chua and co-quick hour Lim combined for 48 points while Rito Lo split his diarchies in the last 23 seconds to lift the Jade to its first win.

Shooters Alvin Que and Earl Villaflor poured in 22 points each for the Emanuel. The managed CSS. Villaflor also sank six triples as he engaged Lim, who had five, in a virtual draw-out.

Grace Christian College, which drew an opening-day bye, battles UNO High School on Wednesday.

All games will be aired on a delayed basis on SkyCable (72 and 161).

PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad and deputy commissioner Tommy Ong passed the tournament's opening rites.

SERVICE WINNER

Tennis Academy of the Philippines Foundation (TAFF) chair Rep. Ronnie G. Jalosjos (seated, third from left) signs the contract appointing for new Davis Cup captain Manny Tecson (second from left) as the foundation's EVP-managing director Lordinger Davis Cup advisers are Randy Villanueva (right) of the Philippine Tennis Association as well as scholars and coaches of the TAFF, namely, Bodex Pagdanan, Bobby Baquiri, Kim Ivor Saraza, Bamar Hernandez, Harriet Bustos, Jesse Palarombon. The TAFF was established by the tennis-loving Jalosjos in July last year to help youngsters and youth players excel in the sport.

Arellano cagers zero in on rare NCRAA 3-peat

ARELLANO UNIVERSITY TRIUNGLED PATH College of Accountancy, 83-75, recently to be closer to a three-peat in the 2008 National Capital Region Athletic Association at the Pilot Technological University Gym.

The Chiefs, the league's back-to-back champions, drew strength from Adrian Cobalo's 16 points and Phil. standouts Orlando Cienaya's 17 to outscoring their unsung win to eight wins.

The Legarda-based school, which is bracketing on the National College Athletic Association's door, led by just a bubbles after the break but broke free when Cobalo and Dionyse soared to connect in the second half.

Arellano's high school team made it a double fill by routing Emilio Aguinaldo College, 92-53, to win the field with a 9-0 slate.

"All our former members in the NCRAA should be credited to our high school program because we get almost all our athletes from a pool of more than 3,000 students," said Mr. Cayo, Arellano's marketing chief.

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DID YOU KNOW

PEDRO GIL Street in Manila used to be known as Hermes, after Jose de la Hermes, captain of the Spanish cruiser Isla de Luzon, which was part of the fleet pitted against American naval forces in the Battle of Manila Bay on May 1, 1898. **Cyril L. Bonalaan, Inquirer Research**

Dad, son faced fiery death in tight embrace

Man goes back inside burning house in failed bid to save boy

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FIREFIGHTERS WHO HAD JUST PUT OUT A blaze which destroyed several houses, a warehouse and a building in Binondo, Manila yesterday came upon a disheartening sight: A man and a boy locked in a tight embrace, their bodies burnt beyond recognition.

The victims were identified as Jimmy Ye Ar, 40, and Jimboy, 12, his eldest son.

It turned out that the father Ye had gone back to his burning house to save his son. Both, however, were overcome by fire and died suffocated to death.

Before that, Ye Ar reportedly gave his three other children and wife, Arlene, 36, by crisscrossing to the house repeatedly until he had gotten them all out.

The three children were unhurt while Arlene suffered facial burns.

FO2 Louela Hernandez, senior investigator of the Manila Fire District, said the blaze started at around 1:54 a.m. yesterday on the second floor of the apartment being rented by the Ye at #17 M. de Santos St., Barangay 270 in Tondo.

The fire destroyed more than 50 structures, including the Ko Kim Building at 830 Asuncion St., the Oxford Warehouse on Juan de Dios-cano Street and several houses made of light materials.

At a stand, 138 persons were left homeless while a fire volunteer, James Cua, 17, broke his foot as he was hurling the blaze.

Fifth alarm

The fire reached the fifth alarm before it was placed under control at around 6:15 a.m. It was put out at around 11:26 a.m.

Hernandez said they have yet to determine the cause of the fire. He estimated the damage to property at around P1 million.

THEI AIN'T REAL FOLKS

Policeman and a security guard help out a man, one of the "victims" in yesterday's "bombing incident" at the Artists Colonies in Cubao, Quezon City, which left 6 "dead" and 21 "injured." The incident, however, was just a simulation of a terror attack, one of several conducted by the Quezon City Police District to keep its men on their toes. QCPD officials said their scientific exercises drills so that policemen would get enough practice and reduce their response time from the present seven to 10 minutes to just three minutes. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

582,989 rode LRT-1 on Black Nazarene day

THE NUMBER OF RIDERS ON the Light Rail Transit Line 1 hit a record high on Jan. 9—the Feast of the Black Nazarene—due largely to its 25 years of operation.

In a statement released over the weekend, Light Transit Authority Administrator Melquiades A. Robles said 582,989 passengers took the LRT Line 1 on Jan. 9, shattering the previous record of 542,605 passengers which was set on Jan. 16, 1998.

According to Robles, a new combined ridership record (LRT Lines 1 and 2) was also set—785,674 passengers compared to 643,688 passengers in 2004.

Due to the huge volume of passengers on Jan. 9, Robles and the LRTA Operations Department had to pull out several train crew supervisors from their posts and assign them to drive some of the trains.

The department also deployed additional train operators so that the LRTA could continuously field its 31 trains at rare extensive intervals.

Robles said they were able to set a new record following the completion of the agency's Capacity Expansion Project in 2003 and the speedy rehabilitation of several trains.

"Because of Capex (I and) our rehabilitation efforts, we now have more trains to service passengers and bigger stations with more toilets/booths to accommodate them," he added.

Last Friday, the LRTA allowed limited diversion of the Black Nazarene to board its trains for the first time.

It also deployed additional security, police dogs, medical and customer relations personnel and rollers to the Gil Puyat, Central, Quiricada, D. Jose and Roxas stations to accommodate the additional passengers.

Bike thief makes wrong turn, goes straight into cops' arms

By Julie M. Aurelio

FOR COMMITTING ONE blunder after another, an 18-year-old man arrested by Quezon City policemen on Saturday.

The unlucky man was identified as Ramon Ipita, a resident of 8 Basilio Street in Pasay City.

According to the police, Ipita's first mistake was stealing a motorcycle which had been left in front of his house.

While driving the vehicle on his way to Novaliches, the teenager committed his second mistake: He ignored a group of policemen who tried to flag him down on North Avenue.

In his haste to escape from the pursuing lawmen, Ipita made yet another mistake: He turned right into the North Luzon Expressway where motorcycles are banned.

Insp. Angelo Nicolas of the Quezon City Police District's station (belt) said it was only after they caught up with Ipita that they discovered he had stolen the blue Honda Wave motorcycle with license plate 4168 DR.

Nicolas said his men flagged down the teenager because his motorcycle did not have a registration sticker from the Land Transportation Office.

"Upon sport many last our cops eventually caught up with him on the SLEX, where motorcycles are not allowed," he added.

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Teresa Prieto-Valdes

Eve Abesamis

Eva, on the other hand, wanted best results for her hair. "I didn't want to use other products. I just wanted the best. When a friend recommended Svenson, I decided to give it a try. I had no more falling hair. It's back to its lush, shiny, stunning look. I have I made the right decision. Thanks to Svenson!"

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13 wanted for bank robberies, other Metro crimes nabbed over the weekend

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SEVERAL NAMED WERE STRICKEN off the Philippine National Police's list of wanted men after arrests of them were announced in separate operations conducted last week.

PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa yesterday announced the arrest of Roy Gilbert Colangco, alleged leader of the notorious Ampang Colangco group which was reportedly behind several big-time robberies in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Colangco, who likewise is Ampang and Mara, was arrested with four of his cohorts on Jan. 9 in Bigaa City by a joint team from the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and Special Action Force.

According to Verzosa, Colangco's group had links with the equally notorious Bisoy-Bisoy and Ocampo robbery gangs, which lost nine of its members in a shootout last year with police operatives in Pandacan City.

"This is a very big project of confirmed elements of the PNP ... The Colangco group is connected with the Alvin Flores group, or the Wanya-Wanay/Umerah group. They would join forces in different big operations ... There appears to be an exchange of personnel and weapons [among the groups]," Verzosa told reporters.

"That's why you see, there's been no big-time robbery since the Pandacan shootout incident," he said.

CIDG records showed the group was behind at least 12 heists since 2008, among them the P1.3 million robbery in January 2008 of the Landbank branch in West Avenue, Quezon City.

Colangco's group was also believed to have robbed the Banco de Oro branches in SM Sucat and Las Piñas of a total of P16.4 million in cash.

On the same day Colangco was arrested, the CIDG nabbed in an entrapment operation a police officer, a retired military man and the manager of a security agency for possessing in Manila Pairing, Quezon City.

Those arrested were SPO1 Gil Manongdong, 43, an officer assigned at Camp Crame's Directorate for Operations, retired Army officer Honorio Hipe, 44 and Geraldo Carrollan, the manager of a security agency.

Seized from them were five 40-16 rifles, a baby armalite and several magazines and ammunition.

The PNP also arrested over the weekend members of the so-called "Sakto" gang who were charged with killing Emelio Garcia, a member of the Viva Hot Babes, in San Fernando, Pampanga, in April.

Benny Estrelgo, Angelito Reyes, Jerry Ignalan, Ernesto Augusto Jr. and Edwin Baguio were arrested in Barrio Salapungan, Pampanga, on Sunday.

Their arrest came two days after the group robbed a family in Taytay, Rizal, taking some P1.28,000 worth of jewelry and P5,000 in cash.

METROBRIEFS

2 men charged with estafa

Orlando and Ernesto Ramos were charged against two men at the Manila Regional Trial Court after a woman accused them of providing her with fake travel documents which led to her detention and deportation from the United States two years ago. Edward de Dante and Bonnie Benedio were charged with estafa through falsification of public documents by Cecilia Cruz, a resident of Balagtas, Bulacan. Assistant City Prosecutor Lael Ramos, assigned to the 3rd Special Inquest Division, said the 3rd Special Inquest Division, said the duo had taken Cruz's money amounting to P40,000 each. Based on Cruz's complaint, de Dante and Benedio took P5,111,000 from several documents, including a passport and a US visa, for her trip to the US in 2000. Investigation records, however, obtained from all the Rio Cities County jail in California for 17 days and then deported her.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Fernando gives to charity

IKA BRGAI from his antique image, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday donated P200,000 to Caritas Manila for its charity projects. Fernando, who has been criticized for his campaign against sidewalk vendors and illegal settlers, said the money was part of his winnings from "Celebrity Duets," a reality singing contest over television network GMA-7. He added that he chose Caritas because of projects for the needy. The MMDA chair, who has been called a "modern-day Hitler" by activist groups, was, meanwhile, praised by Caritas executive director Msgr. Anton Pascual. According to Pascual, Filipinos were always using the Divine Love—some pesos, lang, pero sometimes ang Lagay (bribe) ko ay lagak ng kalooban. "The Bible teaches discipline because without discipline, we will not prosper. I am in favor of what Chairman Fernando is doing—disciplining people in Metro Manila because it is what we need, and the Church is always giving emphasis to this, particularly among the youth," the priest said in a mixture of English and Filipino. Fernando said he undertook the campaign because there would be chaos without it. "We really need to discipline our motorists and commuters, that's why we put up mass rail structures in Metro Manila," he said.

Jillian M. Lopez

2 hurt in gas leak explosion

A 65-YEAR-OLD woman was badly burned while her 3-year-old granddaughter was injured when the flames leaking from a liquefied petroleum gas tank triggered an explosion in her house in Manila yesterday afternoon. Lorenza Villanueva suffered severe burns on the face and body while Ella was hurt after she was hit by flying debris. The explosion was said to have set fire to the house of Villanueva's son-in-law Ricardo Ilo, Barangay 12 in Sampaloc, Fernando, the Manila Bulletin reported. Fire Officer 2 Rolando Nuval of the Manila Police District-Sampaloc Station 4 said the incident happened at around 11 a.m. yesterday. Nuval said Villanueva was about to shut off the valve of the LPG gas tank after she smelled the gas fumes when the explosion occurred. Villanueva was brought to the Philippine General Hospital for first aid but Villanueva was later moved to another hospital.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Kidlat Tahimik films at UP

KIDLAT TAHIMIK, the all-rounder here responsible for Kidlat Tahimik Retrospective at the University of the Philippines Film Center (5th Level, Quezon City, to celebrate Tahimik's 33 years of filmmaking that reflect the Filipino's "indie-genius" strengths. Every 5 p.m. from Jan. 12 to 15, organizers will screen of this talented Bernal Gallery of the UP Film Center the works of Kidlat Tahimik, who has gained international acclaim through his films such as "Mababangong Bangungot" (1977) and "Turumba" (1983). The retrospective features three-award-winning films and other movies Tahimik has made since the 1970s when he was virtually the Lone Ranger of Pinoy indie-filmy. "Until 15 years or so ago, we had difficulty looking for people to watch indie films, but independent films are more accepting by filmmakers," said Tahimik, adding how new Pinoy indie filmmakers are winning awards in international film festivals. The retrospective also features "Kidlat Obra ang Bahagharì? (Why is Yellow the Center of the Rainbow?)", "Balbal Ko, Mahal Ko a.k.a. Japanese Survivors of a Filipino Feudalism", "Banal na Bakya a.k.a. Holy Wood" and "Sheng Lumabas ng Telon (Who Invented the Yolk?)".

Marrie Rikkene Jaquilar Northern Luzon

THEY WILL SOON GROW
This is what this baby Sanso seems to be telling the photographer as he and 300 other Boy Scouts from different schools in Metro Manila joined a tree planting activity last Saturday in several places within Intramuros, the Aseán Garden and from across City Hall and Puerta Real. The event is part of the efforts to regreen the Walled City.

ALEX BADAYOS

3 teenagers get jail terms over rape case

By DJ Yap

A TEENAGER WILL SERVE UP to eight years in jail for raping his cousin two years ago even though he was a minor at the time he committed the crime, a Muntinlupa court ruled.

Judge Edwin D. Sorongon of the Regional Trial Court Branch 274 convicted Rodolfo B. Carlos, posting that he had turned 18 before the decision was read on Dec. 16, 2008.

Two others, including another minor who was only 16 then, were found guilty of acts of lasciviousness, a lesser charge.

One of them, Ronnie C. Salas, who was 19 at the time of the crime, was sentenced to a prison term ranging from two to six years.

The same penalty was meted out to the minor, but his sentence was suspended under the Juvenile Justice Act.

The case involved committed in the Regional Recovery, Empowerment and Development Assistance in Olongapo City to demonstrate how he could be rehabilitated.

Court documents showed that all three accused were the neighbors of the victim's father and were known later in their town to public notice.

The victim, who was then 17, told the court that in the early morning of Feb. 2, 2007, while she was sleeping in a mattress in the living room of their house in Mandaluyong City, Carlos lay beside her and raped her.

She said she ran upstairs to her room crying and went to sleep. The two other accused then went in her room and molested her.

For their defense, all three accused denied the charges. But a medical examination later revealed a "deep healed laceration" in the victim's genitals, indicating recent injury.

Uneven justice: Might is right

THE VALLEY GOLF AND COUNTRY Club played favorites in presiding the antagonism in the golf feud between the De la Paces and the Pangandamans.

It expelled homeowner Delfin de la Paz, but only suspended Agerico Ilustre Secretary Senator Pangandaman Jr.

The Valley Golf Club management could have played fair by expelling both De la Paz and Pangandaman.

In this country, power wins over wealth anytime.

That's why the rich join the government so they have both power and wealth.

• • •

If you are the Pangandamans in your golf course, forget about golf citizenship and let them overrule you.

If you argue with them, you might suffer the fate of the De la Pazes.

• • •

Clearly, the De la Pazes—Delfin and his 14-year-old Bimo—were the aggrieved party.

But since the Pangandamans are powerful and very close to Malacañang, they got off with a lighter penalty from the Valley Golf management. Might is right.

• • •

President Gloria was fast in suspending officials of the Department of Justice who figured in the "Alabang Boys" drug case, but hasn't asked her agitprop talents secretary to go on leave as well on the "golf war."

May I venture a guess why GMA doesn't want to punish Pangandaman?

Pangandaman was campaign manager of cocoy, with the backing of the President—in siding with the laborers of Hacienda Luisita in their quarrel with the management.

One of the owners of Hacienda Luisita is former President Cory, who was to the forefront of calls for GMA to resign over the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Right or wrong, GMA will back her ally subordinates.

• • •

Turn a morbid idea to hollered by an alleged conspiracy to let loose on my screen new gushers of illegal drugs," said the President in asking some 000 officials to go on leave.

Mr. Wise guy, please investigate allegations one of your close subordinates allegedly held an orgies aboard a yacht off Manila Bay.

According to talk going the rounds, your subordinate gave away fortune to his female partner as well as to those of his friends.

Fortune is a drug that heightens the sexual urge.

If don't see pudding. I don't know what is.

• • •

Maj. Ferdinand Marcelino of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), could be charged with obstructions of justice if he didn't appear before the SIB to swear to his statement on the leaflet offer to SIGI officials.

Marcelino and his men arrested the Alabang Boys.

Their payout over the impending release of the whore of influential families led to the continued detention of the suspects.

If you were Marcelino, and you knew that the high-end fortune of besmirched DRUG is under the justice department, would you answer the summons from the SIB?

• • •

Floods in Cagayan de Oro City and Misamis Oriental were caused by the indiscriminate cutting down of trees and mining activities in the mountains.

Residents of the city and province are suffering from the greed of politicians they voted into office.

The law of cause and effect is at work.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
PCA Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 9296676/9296847 Telefax No. 9268674

INVITATION TO APPLY ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), Department of Agriculture invites qualified commercial/manufacturers/suppliers to participate in the bidding of "One Unit Diesel Engine, Various Construction Supplies/Materials, Labor and Rental of Equipment (Welding Machine)". Truck and Hull Fabrication mentioned to be used at BFAR-NFTDC, Dagupan City with an Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) PHP2,141,764.00.

Bid documents shall be available at the BFAR Property Section upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of PHP2,000.00 starting January 26, 2009.

Pre-bid Conference will be held on January 26, 2009 at 2:00pm, BFAR Conference Room 3rd Flr. PCA Bldg., Elliptical Rd. Diliman, Quezon City.

Eligibility documents, technical and financial proposal in three sealed envelopes must be submitted at the BFAR-BAC Secretariat PCA Compound, Diliman, Quezon City not later than 10:00 a.m. on February 9, 2009 and shall be opened on the same time and date in the presence of the participants/bidders.

For more information, please call the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 426-3166.

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, before any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal is evaluated by the BAC & the most advantageous to the government. The BAC assumes no obligation to compensate or reasonably the bidder for any expenses which may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or doesn't guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) MALCOLM L. SARMIENTO, JR.
Director

Indonesia ferry sinks; 250 dead

PEKEPAIL, INDONESIA—Huge waves and driving rain hindered rescuers on Monday as they searched for about 250 people missing and feared dead after a ferry packed with passengers and cargo capsized in a cyclone off Indonesia's Sulawesi island.

Many passengers were sleeping when the 700-ton Teratai Prima was struck by tropical cyclone "Charlotte" before dawn on Sunday, officials and witnesses said. It sank about 50 kilometers off the coast of western Sulawesi.

"People were screaming, 'Help, help!'" said survivor Hasipah Daeng Gassing, 35, who clung to a tire for two hours in the pounding storm but lost his 9-year-old son and father-in-law. He was one of 22 rescued.

"I lost hold of my son and my father-in-law when a big wave hit us," Gassing said, weeping.

The ferry was slammed by 13-foot-high waves, said Gassing, who arrived on Monday with other survivors in the port of Mamuju—where the ferry journey had started. He said he estimated about 30 minutes before it went down. The boat had been traveling to Samarinda on the Indonesian half of Borneo island.

The captain...who also survived—was being investigated for allegedly ignoring warnings from the Indonesian weather agency that conditions on the crossing were too dangerous, Transport Minister Jusman Syafii Djamal said.

Eighteen passengers and four crew members were rescued from the sea by fishermen before the military launched a search operation at daybreak on Monday. Djamal told reporters in Jakarta. AP

AN INDONESIAN woman grieves after learning that her son is one of the victims of the ferry disaster. AP

Focus on immigration crimes seen overtaxing US prosecutors

LAREDO, TEXAS—INSIDE A courthouse just north of the Rio Grande, federal judges marry one prison sentence to those of 40 or 50 illegal immigrants at a time. The accused, mostly from Central America, Brazil and Mexico, wear rough travel clothes that speak of arduous journeys: flannel shirts, sweatsuits, jeans and running shoes or work boots.

The courtroom scene capsizes much of the immigration. Under a Justice Department program that relies on plea deals, most are charged with misdemeanors like improper entry.

Federal prosecutions of immigration crimes nearly doubled in the last fiscal year, reaching more than 70,000 immigration cases to flood your 2008, according to federal data compiled by a Syracuse University research group.

The emphasis, many federal judges and prosecutors say, has siphoned resources from other crimes, eroded morale among federal lawyers and overloaded the federal court system. Many of those cases are routinely referred to state and county officials, who say they often lack the finances or authority to effectively prosecute them.

Bush administration officials say that the government's focus on immigration crimes is an outgrowth of its counterterrorism strategy and vigorous pursuit of immigrants with criminal records.

Immigration prosecutions have done steeply over the last five years, while white-collar prosecutions have fallen by 18 percent, securities prosecutions have dropped by 19 percent, organized crime prosecutions are down by 28 percent, and public corruption prosecutions have dropped by 14 percent, according to the Syracuse group's analysis. Drug prosecutions—the enforcement priority of the Reagan, first Bush and Clinton administrations...have declined by 28 percent since 1994.

"I have seen a national abdication by the Justice Department," said Attorney General Terry Goddard of Arizona. US attorneys on the Southwest border, who handle the bulk of immigration prosecutions, usually decline to prosecute drug cases—even 500 pounds of marijuana or less—about $500,000 to $600,000 worth. In a result of Washington's decision to forgo many of those cases, Goddard said, local agencies are handling many of them and becoming overburdened.

Peter Carr, a spokesperson for the Justice Department, said that felony prosecutions of immigration crimes had increased 40 percent from 2000 to 2007 but said most other prosecutions had remained steady. But Justice Department statistics Carr provided to The New York Times did not count tens of thousands of misdemeanor charges and prosecutions conducted before magistrate judges. Data from the Syracuse group, known as the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, or TRAC, included those cases, which are driving the sharp growth in immigration cases. NYT

Europe gas deal undone, redone

MOSCOW—THE UKRAINE government on Monday signed a new version of a deal to resume Russian gas exports through Ukraine after being accused of changing an earlier accord, Russia's energy giant said.

With hundreds of thousands of people across Europe shivering through a bitter cold snaps, Gazprom said Ukraine had approved an accord on gas flows through Ukraine after Moscow had accused Kiev of rescinding the accord by adding new conditions.

Ukrainian had added articles to the accord denying it owed Russia money for gas or that it had stolen gas, according to a version seen by AFP.

"A Gazprom delegation held talks in Kiev this morning. After the talks, the Ukrainian side signed a Protocol on Resuming Gas Transit through Ukraine' with no additional provisos," Gazprom said in a statement.

From officers for Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Ukraine state gas company Naftogaz declined to confirm the deal had been signed, although the European Union had earlier said Kiev would give its approval.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev had said supplies would only resume once Ukraine signs the documents and teams of monitors are in place.

Russia halted supplies to Europe through Ukraine last week accusing Ukraine of "stealing" the gas. The Kiev government has denied this and accuses Moscow of provoking a crisis.

Gazprom chief Alexei Miller and Russian Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko were expected in Brussels later on Monday for an emergency meeting of EU energy ministers to discuss the crisis.

Hugo member of central Europe and the Balkans are now without gas for a second week, with schools and factories closed and hundreds of thousands of people made do without heating gas in a bitterly cold winter.

Russia has defied EU calls to resume gas supplies through Ukraine even after EU officials said there were no longer any obstacles to an immediate resumption. AFP

PEOPLE carry wood they collected for their heating in Hidalo, Hungary, on Jan. 11. Russia's gas shipments to Europe via Ukraine stopped after a dispute between two countries over pricing and transit fees. AP

Somali pirate's body washes ashore with $153,000

BOOSAASO, SOMALIA—The body of a Somali pirate who drowned just after receiving a huge ransom washed onshore with $153,000 in cash, a resident said, as the spokesperson for another group of pirates promised to soon free a Ukrainian-crewed ship.

Five pirates drowned on Friday when their small boat capsized after they received a reported $3 million ransom for releasing a Saudi oil tanker.

Resident Omar Abdi Hassan said one of the bodies had been found on a beach near the coastal town of Hanaalleen and relatives were searching for the other four.

"One of them was discovered and they are still looking for the other four. He had $153,000 on a plastic bag in his pocket," he said on Sunday.

The US Navy released photos of a parachute dropping a package onto the deck of the Sirius Star, and said the package was likely to be the ransom delivery.

But five of the dozens of pirates who had hijacked the tanker drowned when their small boat capsized as they returned to shore in rough weather, those other pirates survived but also lost their share of the ransom.

Graeme Gibbon-Brooks, managing director of the British company Dryad Maritime Incel. Ignous Service Ltd., said the incidence was unlikely to deter attacks.

"The loss of potential loss of the ransom means the pirates will be all the more keen to get the next ransom in," he said. "There are people lining up to be pirates."

The Sirius Star had been held since the Ukrainian cargo ship Faina, which was loaded with 33 Soviet-designed battle tanks and crates of small arms. The same day the Sirius Star was released, the family members of the Faina crew appointed for help, saying they were not being kept informed about the negotiations as the state of their loved ones' health.

But a pirate spokesperson assured The associated Press on Sunday that the 25 crew members on the MV Faina were doing well.

"The cargo is safe there unharmed and the crew is healthy," Sugule Ali said. "Once the negotiations end in mutual understanding, the ship, its crew and the cargo as well will be released." AFP

Chavez: Castro unlikely to appear in public again

CARACAS, VENEZUELA—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said on Sunday it is unlikely that ailing former Cuban leader Fidel Castro will ever appear in public again.

"That ended in his cadillac who walked the streets and waves late at night, hugging the people, won't return," Chavez said during his Sunday television and radio program. "That will remain in memories."

He did not dismiss the 82-year-old Castro's current medical condition or say why he thought Castro would not return to public stage.

Chavez has continued to meet occasionally with his friend Castro in private since the former Cuban leader underwent emergency intestinal surgery about 2½ years ago. Castro was last seen in public on July 26, 2006, at a celebration in eastern Cuba.

Since then, Cuban authorities have periodically released photos and videos of Castro meeting with Chavez and other foreign leaders.

Fidel has ceded power to his younger brother Raul Castro, but continues to write essays published in official Cuban media.

"Fidel will live forever, beyond the physical life," Chavez said on Sunday. AP

New board of fraud-hit Satyam meets; shares up

HYDERABAD, INDIA—THE NEW board of India's scandal-hit IT giant Satyam Computers met for the first time on Monday raising hopes for its future and suffering a potential lifeline for beleaguered shareholders.

The group was in disarray following the arrest of its founder Ramalinga Raju, such as how to retain clients, assess the fraud and restore its financial accounts, according to media reports.

The company's shares rebounded more than 50 percent by midday on Monday. Dealers said investors were buoyed by the new government-installed board.

Stocks rose 32.4 rupees, or 31.39 percent, to 36.21 rupees on the main day the Mumbai stock exchange removed the company from the benchmark 30 share futures index in reaction to the billion-dollar accounting scandal.

"Investors are hoping for a leap of faith... a new vision for the firm, but there are several issues which the new board will have to tackle," said P. Sudhakar, executive director with Centrum Broking.

The re-assembled, three-member board—appointed by shareholders in an effort to salvage the country's international business image—began meeting at Satyam's headquarters in the IT hub of Hyderabad early Monday.

They replaced Satyam's own interim board of directors who took charge after founder and chair B. Ramalinga Raju admitted the company's accounts and assets had been falsified for several years.

RAMALINGA Raju AFP

The new members are Deepak Parekh, the chair of private sector banking firm HDFC, C.Achuthan, a former member of regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, and Kiran Karnik, former president of an IT lobby group.

"We have to let investigations continue, and ensure that spurious creation and employee confidence is restored," Karnik, a former head of National Association of Software and Services companies, told media.

The board is likely to brief the media on Monday evening.

Analysts said the board would have to safeguard existing business and seek clients as well as look at potential new owners and auditors for the firm.

Satyam shares were in freefall last week, closing at 23.85 rupees on Friday compared with a 52-week high of around 300 rupees before the scandal broke.

"The stock had been battered... there is hope that the new board would help improve fortunes for the company," said Ashok Bose, a dealer with brokerage WR Securities. AFP

Once mighty PC makers catch bug of deepening slowdown

TAIPEI—THE GLOBAL PC industry would fall for most of last year as other technology sectors but slowed, but its woes caught the brunt of a deepening economic downturn that has hit demand from both consumers and corporate buyers.

As recently as November, J.T. Wang, chair of Acer, the world's No. 3 PC seller, was confident PCs were immune to global downturns due to the growing importance of computers to everyday life.

"Children will still need to go to school. They will need computers! Businesses will continue running. They (we will need computers)!" Wang had said.

But last-said lies months, when a slew of recent sales warnings and cuts in business forecasts signal the sudden downturn will last through most of 2009, if not longer.

"Demand is weak, and I don't think it will improve in January," said Paresh Suthar, an IT analyst at Taiwan Institute of Research.

"We may see demand picking up only in the second half of 2009, when the traditional back-to-school season begins and consumers enter spending again."

Analysts' forecasts for global PC shipments in 2009 vary, but many expect sales to fall. Research firm IDC expects spending on PCs could drop 5.3 percent this year to about 1267 billion, versus its previous forecast of a 5.1 percent increase.

Brands such as Dell and Lenovo, the world's No. 2 and 4 PC sellers, could face more pain mainly due to their reliance on sales to businesses, which have cut back their spending more sharply than consumers, said Gartner analyst Cliff Leu.

"They've already been shifting their focus towards the consumer space, but can they refocus in time? Anyway, even consumer spending is seasonal, needing approach only during the festive and back-to-school periods," which is not enough," Leu said.

Shares in global leader Hewlett-Packard and Acer, both of which have a strong presence in the consumer sector, outperformed their benchmark index in 2008.

Downward revisions in 2009 shipment forecasts from leading chip-making firms—AMD and Intel—are just the first hint of problems in the system. Those were followed by analyst downgrades and reorganization announcements by Dell and Lenovo.

The latest bombshell came last week, when top chipmaker Intel Corp.—which supplies the "brains" behind more than 80 percent of the world's PCs—issued a revenue warning, saying demand for PCs was even worse than it feared.

PC shipment growth in the fourth quarter of 2008 is likely to be soft, as PC brand companies cut both component and consumer to cut back on inventories as a discretionary from for many.

Brands catering to corporate customers may be taking a harder hit than those chasing consumers since the latter may delay corporate computers, as companies reduce or delay new technology spending in the broad economic slowdown, analysts said. Reuters

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Ducos

Major countries struggle to cope with job losses

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIA'S JOBS MARKET SHOWED signs of cracking on Monday under the weight of the crumbling global economy and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown was set to pledge more help for the long-term unemployed.

US President-elect Barack Obama vowed to counteract a financial worse jolt to save more families from losing their homes, as politicians around the world grapple with how to shield voters from the worst effects of a long and deep recession.

Data from the United States on Friday showed more than half a million Americans lost their jobs in December, making 2008 the worst year for employment since World War II.

On Monday a survey from Australia and New Zealand Banking Corp. showed the number of job advertisements in Australia slumped in unseasonary levels in December.

Australia had been one of the few developed economies to have seen its labor market remain relatively buoyant as the worldwide slowdown took hold in 2008.

The survey showed the total number of job advertisements in newspapers and on the Internet slid 9.7 percent in December from the month before, the eighth straight month of losses. Ads were down 28.9 percent from December last year and had fallen 22 percent since September, the sharpest three-month decline on record.

"This month is staggeringly low and suggests that the labor market could be in worse shape than economists expect," said Joshua Williamson, a senior strategist at TD Securities.

Much of the industrialized world is already officially in recession and all the main multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and OECD, have become that developed world economies will shrink this year.

In the United States, slides to Obama, who takes office on Jan. 20, were in talks with Congressional leaders on both the financial bailout plan and a proposed $775 billion stimulus package that the president-elect says is needed to pull the economy out of a deep slump.

"When you look at lines we have handled the home foreclosure situation and whether we've done enough in terms of helping families ... we haven't done enough. Once," Obama said in an interview with ABC's "This Week."

In Britain, where retailer Marks & Spencer said on Monday Winter Sales between them announced last week they were cutting 2,400 jobs, Brown was holding a special jobs summit with industry leaders on Monday.

"We must do everything we can to help those losing their jobs to find work again quickly or to get a new skill," Brown was due to say according to remarks released by his office.

Meanwhile, Asia's export-driven economies continued to show the route of sagging consumer demand from Europe and the United States.

China's exports in December fell 2.8 percent from a year earlier, while imports fell 21.1 percent. Dow Jones Newswires said, citing a person familiar with the data.

In South Korea the Hankyoreh newspaper, citing a Bank of Korea official, reported that the economy contracted by more than 4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008 from the third, a much sharper decline than a previous projection of 1.6 percent.

Shares in China Eastern Airlines fell sharply in Hong Kong after the company said on Tuesday it would report a huge loss for 2008 because of slumping traffic and losses on fuel price hedging contracts.

Germany, Britain, France, Spain and Sweden all reported collapsing factory output last week, with some posting the worst figures in many years, raising expectations that the European Central Bank would cut rates by half a percentage point in a record low of 2 percent in its meeting on Thursday. *Reuters*

AUTO WORKERS demonstrate near GM headquarters during the North American International Auto Show on Jan. 11 in Detroit, Michigan. —AP

US doctors address harmful side effects of ICU stays

FOR YEARS, DOCTORS thought they had done their jobs if patients came out of an intensive care unit alive.

Now, though, researchers say they are alarmed by what they are finding as they track patients for months or years after an ICU stay. Patients, even young ones, can be weak for years. Some have difficulty thinking and communicating or have post-traumatic stress disorder and terrible memories of nightmares they had while heavily sedated.

While patients may be suffering lingering effects from illnesses that brought them to the ICU, researchers are increasingly convinced that spending days, weeks or months on life support in the acute care clinic unexpected, long-lasting effects.

In new some ICUs are trying what seems like a radical solution: reducing sedation levels and getting patients up and walking even though they are gravely ill, complete with feeding tubes, intravenous lines and ventilators.

From a few days to an ICU can be physically devastating immediately afterward, said Dr. Nancy Ali of Ohio State University in a recent study he and colleagues at three other universities reported that 23 percent of patients who had spent at least five days on ventilators could not use their arms to raise themselves or swing patients. Many could not push back against a researcher's hand.

"We had a handful of patients who essentially looked paralyzed," Ali said.

Researchers say the questions about how and why an ICU stay can be so devastating, and new efforts at bring a marked change to the experience—are of increasing importance because, as the population ages, more people are being admitted to the units. And, with medical advances, more patients are surviving.

"We had thought these patients just had up," said Dr. Dale Morris, of Vidar Fierce University Stephic Medical Center. "But now in many of these reports from different universities say they are not really OK."

Every ICU doctor seems to have a story of a patient who illustrated the problem in an understandable way.

Dr. Dale Needham, who runs the critical care physical medicine and rehabilitation program at Johns Hopkins, the mountain climb who are running from a study he has begun. Following patients for five years after they leave the hospital. Many had a hard time regaining their strength, and some were never the same after their ICU stay.

Now, Needham said, instead of declaring success when a patient leaves an ICU alive, he and others have a new set of challenges.

"We are asking ourselves, what can we do on Day 1 to get you out of the hospital and back to work sooner, without problems with weakness, mood and thinking? What can we do for you?" AP

Sharks preying on Aussies

SYDNEY—A SPATE of savage shark attacks in Australia has seen a shower through summer holidaymakers inundated with graphic details and claims that the increase confined predators are increasingly targeting humans.

Three attacks on swimmers within 24 hours over Sunday and Monday—just two weeks after a cattledriver was killed—have fueled a fevered debate over whether new fishing ban put more on the menus.

"Humans are not in the food chain," resident chief Nature Vic Hislop told environmental radio. "It will definitely get worse."

Experts say there is no scientific evidence to support his claim that curbing the shark's natural prey through overfishing has produced a spike in attacks.

But a steady stream of shark reports has seen splash headlines and set radio talkback shows buzzing during the annual school holidays.

• Fifty-year-old banker Brian Green disappeared to a carnival of fins and blood while snorkelling with his son south of Perth on the west coast on Dec. 27. His body has not been found.

• Two surfers were rushed to hospital after separate attacks, one on the east coast north of Sydney and one in Tasmania, on Monday.

• A snorkeller's leg was ripped in a mid-morning attack south of Sydney by what is believed to be a bull shark, on Monday.

• Prompting the attacks have been several scares, including a Japanese being knocked into the water by a great white shark off a popular Sydney beach. AFP

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BUSINESS

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PDIC prepares to bid out 67% of PBCom

Deadline for owners' divestment in March

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-OWNED PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORP IS preparing to bid out 67 percent of medium-sized Philippine Bank of Communications (PBCom) as a five-year deadline for existing shareholders to divest control of the bank expires this March.

"The bidding period is until March 25. We are now on the lookout and will soon choose the financial advisers and independent auditor to help us in the bidding," PDIC president Jose Nograles said at the sidelines of a roundtable forum with the business staff.

The shares to be sold represent a big chunk of the 91-percent combined interest of the Lao (37 percent), Mubb (28 percent) and Ching (26 percent) families that jointly own PBCom.

Five years ago, when PDIC extended a P7.6-billion financial package to the bank, the shareholders were required to sell at least 67 percent of the bank to a new investor by March 2009. Under the agreement, PDIC obtained a special power of attorney (SPA) for it to redeem the sale of shares if the bank's shareholders would not be able to do so within the prescribed period.

PDIC is planning to use that document to bid out a controlling stake in the bank. Nograles said a list of potential financial advisers has been submitted to PDIC.

"The process has to be clean and transparent," Nograles said when asked whether the bidding would likely attract interest.

In a separate interview, PBCom director Antonio Lao said the bank's shareholders had long been notified by PDIC that it would initiate procedures to bid out the bank. He said the bank's board would convene later this month.

If the shareholders would wish to stop the PDIC from bidding out the bank, Lao said one option would be simply to pre-pay or settle ahead of maturity the loan obtained from the government. He clarified, however, that this was not necessarily what his family would like to happen.

Lao added that a PDIC-initiated bidding might turn out to be a good option in order to get the best pricing for the shares.

BSP hints at further monetary easing

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) a further easing of its monetary policy has been outlined a welcome option, believing that the move is yet to come so far as the economic impact of "deleveraging" is concerned.

"In essence the ill-effects of "deleveraging," or the pulling out of investments mainly from emerging markets to generate liquidity, the BSP said it would create an environment that will support a healthy supply of money in the system. One way is through a looser monetary policy.

"The key approach under the current turbulent financial conditions is to ensure that there is no credit gridlock and, at the same time, provide sufficient liquidity to fund the growth requirements of the economy," the BSP said to to report an economic and financial developments released yesterday.

The BSP's overnight borrowing and lending rates currently stand at 5.5 and 7.5 percent.

Some market analysts said the BSP would likely cut its key policy rates further, by 25 to 50 basis points, when the Monetary Board meets on Jan. 29, as it aims to help prompt the economy by encouraging the banking system to continue lending aggressively.

CLOSING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN YOU AND PERFECTION

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of January 12, 2009

STOCK	SYMBOL	ISSUE	PREV.	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
MINING							
OIL							
PROPERTY							
SERVICES							
HOLDING FIRMS							
FOREIGN							

BUSINESS

With inflation seen to ease, T-bill rate drops

182-day bill marks steep decline, Treasury reports

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TREASURY BILL AUCTIONS YESTERDAY dropped as banks anticipated the lowering of lending rates due to expectations of a slowdown in the growth of consumer prices.

The 91-day bills fetched 5 percent in yesterday's auction, down 112 basis points from the previous 6.112 percent.

Yields for the three-month debt instruments reached P3.39 billion, higher than the government's offering of P1 billion.

The rate for the 182-day bill marked a steep decline, dropping by 345.2 basis points to 5.249 percent from 8.7 percent previously.

Yields for the six-month debt instruments reached P7.45 billion, higher than the government's offering of only P2.5 billion.

The 364-day bills fetched 5.1171 percent, down 124.3 basis points from the previous rate of 6.414 percent.

Bids for the one-year government securities amounted to P11.35 billion, also breaching the debt offering of P9.5 billion.

These figures mean that the government borrowed a total of P7.06 billion, while injecting P15.37 billion in tenders.

Roberto Tan, national treasurer and auction committee chair, said a helped that there was much liquidity in the market this week, with P150 billion worth of debt maturing.

There is also "expectations of benign inflation, as well as expectations on policy responses (of the BSP) on that," Tan said.

He added that the government also accepted fresh bids when it was able to raise $1.5 billion during a recent global bond offering.

"Thus, demand for lending it not as high as it should have been without these new funds from the international capital markets," Tan said.

Altogether, these factors worked together and reinforced the auction held (Monday)," he added.

Last week, the Department of Finance announced that the government completed its foreign capital borrowing needs for 2009 through the sale of bonds priced at P89.150 billion with a yield of 8.5 percent.

According to the National Treasury, 61 percent of the bonds—which would mature on June 17, 2009—were sold to Asia, 37 percent in the United States, and 22 percent in Europe.

Rice and fall

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Bernal III

WE JUST RECORDED WORD THAT SOME people in Binondo, who may or may not be part of the so-called rice cartel, are to appear at Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

And it's not because, among the habitual boys of the Lola at the Palace who have come and gone, Yap is proving to be more lasting power. It's just that, while our tireless reporters making a killing elsewhere in the world last year here in the Philippines, the traders had a pretty bad year because of falling prices of the commodity.

Here' is the breakdown. From prices of between P40 and P50 a kilo in the summer of last year, when the global financial crisis erupted, the price of rice dropped to between P20 and P30 a kilo at the end 2008.

But in Thailand and Vietnam, the world's most prolific producers of rice, the prices were equivalent to more than P60 a kilo. How did that happen?

* * *

I KNOW that the rice administration had ditched it using mathematical magic to reduce the unemployment rate, for instance, or the shortage in public school classrooms.

But in this case, the Department of Agriculture (DA) actually flooded the market with cheap rice. The National Food Authority (NFA) for instance was selling its stock at less than P20 a kilo for a long time last year.

Naturally, new retailers had to follow the NFA lead, or else they would lose their pants and everything underneath.

With such a relatively less retail price of rice, you would think that the biggest losers should be the rice farmers.

Not so. You see, while the NFA was trying to push down retail prices, it was also picking up the lowering prices of rice from the farmers. In effect, this rice administration subsidized the rice that we ate last year.

That of course faced the Binondo guys,—who may or may not be part of the so-called rice cartel—to raise their buying prices also, just to compete with the NFA.

Well, this rice administration has the financial muscle to grant subsidies. In everybody's terms, the Lola at the Palace launched the "Kasa ng Vil" program, setting aside a big portion of the collections from the expanded value-added tax to bankroll its subsidy program.

In other words, the government was just giving back to us what it also took away from us. The thing was, the subsidy merely benefited the poor. I just thought it was worth all the sigh that Arthur Yap uttered upon Binondo.

* * *

AT LONG last, the DA now has a program to promote organic agriculture.

The DA signed an agreement in order to take such a program with a couple of private groups—the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and the La Liga Policy Institute.

The program is known as "Go Organic," part of the SIN PRIZES support program, which in turn stands for "Strikers, Irrigation, Infrastructure, Loans, Drivers and Seeds."

Anyway our source in the DA said that Yap named the "Go Organic" program to be his legacy. Hopefully PAs are not exactly dying to have chemicals for lunch.

* * *

IT SEEMS that San Miguel Corp. vice chair Ramon Ang will also become chair of Petron Corp.

San Miguel is said to be the financier of the recent acquisition of majority shares in Petron, which San Miguel rescued through a financial group.

Word is also going around that the chair of San Miguel, Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., will also sit in the Petron board, but only as a director.

The Cojuangco-Ang combine, in case you forgot, cleaned up San Miguel in the past 18 years, making profits to double digit growth rates yearly.

Of course we have been hearing rumors about some cuckoos in Petron.

Thus, nobody is surprised that the same team should try to introduce changes to the oil company. Pesto what. I gathered, the San Miguel group will put in Petron new top guys—a Boston guy and a corporate expert.

Question: Can the guys down here in our boondock empire pump prime to go down some more? Let's see.

* * *

THERE IS also talk that one of the salpans is readying a court case against its financial advisers.

It seems that the poor multibillionaire lost a bundle—you know, hundreds of millions of dollars—because of the worldwide financial meltdown.

The question now is, whom will the salpan sue?

Cause financial groups abroad normally have "agents" here, who turn high net worth individuals into instant revenues.

The thing is, the agents' relationship with these financial groups is not exactly close. The lawyers of the salpan must be really busy.

The Republic of the Philippines

Invites the Owners of

Each Series of Eligible Bonds*

to submit, in separate auctions for each series of Eligible Bonds, offers to exchange

Group A Eligible Bonds
for
New Bonds due 2014
or
New Bonds due 2019
and
Group B Eligible Bonds
for
New Bonds due 2016

THE INVITATION TO EXCHANGE ELIGIBLE BONDS WILL EXPIRE AT 5:00 PM (MANILA TIME) ON 23 JANUARY 2009 (THE "EXPIRATION DATE") UNLESS EXTENDED OR TERMINATED EARLIER

The Republic of the Philippines (the "Republic") hereby invites owners of Eligible Bonds to submit offers to exchange Eligible Bonds for New Bonds due 2014 ("5-Year Benchmark Bonds") and New Bonds due 2019 ("10-Year Benchmark Bonds"), as referred to above. The terms and conditions of the Exchange are set forth in the Offering Circular dated 11 January 2009, copies of which may be obtained from the website of the Bureau of the Treasury, which can be accessed through the Internet address www.treasury.gov.ph, or from a Government Securities Eligible Dealer ("GSED"). Interested owners of Eligible Bonds should contact a GSED with any questions they may have.

The purpose of the Invitation is to create a new series of Benchmark Bonds. Benchmark Bonds are intended to be more liquid and therefore, should trade in the secondary market more efficiently. By creating Benchmark Bonds, the Republic aims to improve liquidity for investors and thereby lower its borrowing costs over time. The Invitation is part of a broader program of the Republic to manage its liabilities.

This announcement is not an offer or a solicitation of offers. The Invitation is made solely pursuant, and subject to the Offering Circular. After you make your investment decision, you should rely on the information contained or incorporated by reference in the Offering Circular and on any further announcements or communication that may be expressly authorized by the Republic. The Republic has not authorized anyone to provide you with information that is different. The Invitation does not constitute, and may not be used in connection with, an offer or solicitation by anyone in any jurisdiction in which such offer or solicitation is not permitted by law or in which the person making such offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation.

* A full listing of the Eligible Bonds can be found in the Offering Circular dated 13 January 2009 which is available on the website of the Bureau of the Treasury (www.treasury.gov.ph).

PNB and PNBGEN Ink MOA to Provide Insurance to UITF Clients

The Philippine National Bank (PNB) and the PNB General Insurers Co., Inc. (PNBGen) have entered into an agreement to provide insurance benefits to participants of PNB DBP-BAM Bukidnon Unit Investment Trust Fund (UITF). A peso-denominated, interest-bearing bond fund, DBP-BAM Bukidnon UITF aims to help investors in their goal of providing for their child's education or gain start-up capital for a small business. This UITF offers the lowest minimum initial participation in the market at Php 5,000 with a required monthly contribution of at least Php 0, 000 for 12 months.

PNBGen is a wholly-owned subsidiary of PNB that offers fire, marine, motor car, surety, casualty, engineering, and accident insurance. Under the partnership, PNBGen shall cover participants of the DBP-BAM Bukidnon UITF with Accidental Death, Dismemberment, and total Permanent Disablement insurance. The insurance coverage shall be double the amount of the participant's initial contribution effective for 12 months after account opening. After one year, the coverage shall be based on the client's annual ADB for the previous year provided the monthly contribution is complied with.

PNB is one of the first banking players in the Trust business. It offers investors with a embracing of UITFs and other Trust products to address their specific investment objectives and risk appetites. Just recently PNB emerged as number one in less different categories in the Walden Asset Philippines' With survey on investment performance of retirement funds as of the second quarter. These categories are the All Trustee Funds - Investment Managers Handling Less Than Five Funds and the Trustee's Funds Managed with Full Discretion - Investment Funds Handling Less Than Five Funds.

Present during the signing ceremony are, from left, PNB FVP and Trust Portfolio Management and Product Development Division Head Bonnie Dasal-Sio, PNB SVP and Trust Business Development and Account Management Division Head Ringel L. Zamarron, PNB FSVP and Trust Officer Ma. Elena S. Sarmiento, PNBGen SVP, COO and CRC Rebecca B. dela Cruz, PNB FVP and Bancassurance Group Head Eduardo R. Perez, and PNBGen AVP Cesario A. Jagtiana.

LIFESTYLE Wellness
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Kenneth Cobonpue's driving passion

How world-renowned Filipino designer and friends get a workout

PACE car-on-a-course run in Balamban in western Cebu.

By Kaye G. Lorn
Contributor

A HOUSEHOLD NAME SYNONYMOUS to good design, Kenneth Cobonpue is internationally envied as the maker of the bed that Brad Pitt—and presumably Angelina Jolie—sleep in.

But his love for all things wood did not also led him to become a founding member and current president of Cebu's Pedestrians and Classic Car Enthusiasts (PACE) club, according to PACE member Chris Tio. "The key word in PACE is 'enthusiasts.' Some people collect cars just to look at them or to show off. PACE is all about the passion for cars and for driving."

Inspired by the fervor of the Honda Sports Car Club, the elite collectors' club of the Philippines whose members are established personalities yet who make time to do vintage runs around the country, PACE

CONTINUED ON C2

Do you need lifestyle coaching?

By Mitch Felipe
Contributor

IT'S DIFFICULT TO RETURN TO AN ACTIVE lifestyle and well-controlled eating right after the holidays due to the following:

• **Problem magnification.** You think of starting from scratch because you feel that you've gained all the weight you lost. But in reality, you gained just a pound or two.

• **Impatience.** You feel old for a very long process so you resort to a quick-fix strategy.

• **Pessimism.** You focus on the negative, like you are fat and hopeless when it comes to fitness, weight and health improvement.

• **Laziness.** "Ito-okay ko'ng fitness activities.

Can lifestyle coaching help you deal with it?

Lifestyle coaching goes beyond exercise routines and nutrition counseling. A lifestyle coach trained and supervised in nutritional science, exercise science and behavioral science focuses on modifying major behavioral risk factors like inactivity, high dietary cholesterol, alcohol abuse and smoking which are leading causes of death.

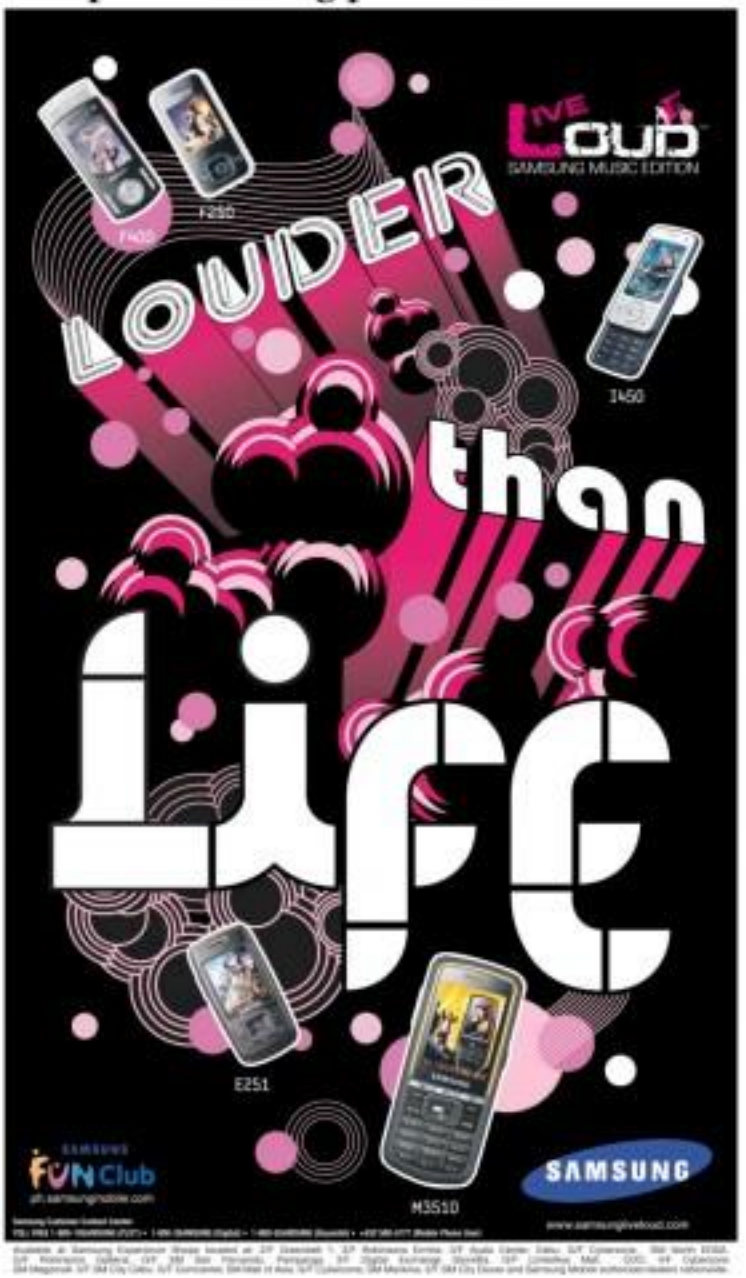
A lifestyle coach uses cognitive-behavioral principles during coaching sessions by:

• Restructuring cell thinking, teaching you how to modify your economic fall of junk food at home.

• Educating you about the importance of being active and eating healthy, helping you set short- and long-term realistic and manageable goals like losing weight.

• Helping to identify personal issues that

GO TO C2



Kenneth Cobonpue's driving passion

PACE storage cars in neat display including the Jaguar E-type Roadster.

From page C1

began as a really informal club three years ago, of four friends who wanted to do the same drive, drive, drive. And drive around they did.

A by-invitation-only club now with 12 members and over 60 cars, they have gone to Negros, Bohol and Dumaguete, and have covered Cebu from tip-to-tip in their glorified vintage cars. Described as semi-old, as from 1974 that are restored to as close as their original condition as possible, vintage cars are all about the experience. Driving them at a speed close to that of a new car needs a tremendous amount of skill. There are no safety features, no ABS brakes and no power steering in vintage cars.

"It's all about the drive. You need 100-percent concentration on the road," he explains. "You can't think about work, the house or anything. If your cell phone rings while you're driving, you can't pick it up or text thing you know, you might be slamming a wall. So after the run, you're just completely exhausted. It's like letting everything out."

They are also almost a lot closer and more spiritual to drive. "It's man, the machine and the road," Cobonpue reveals, "You're not united by electronics. You're as close to the ground, you feel the road more."

Aside from the integrity of the driving experience, Tin claims that the rides allow you see people as they really are. Cobonpue's design background expects him to envisage the color of these cars in a run by color, with a thrash in black every couple of cars instead of the more judgmental way of arranging them from older to newer for a semblance of order.

The results here in one of their Bacolod runs, after close to 12 hours of nonstop driving, they finally arrived in Bacolod at 7:30 p.m. Everyone was starving and beat last all Cobonpue wanted to do was bath for a gin stubborn he could clean his car.

Adventure challenge

The experience is what keeps PACE running, and the challenge and the unpredictability of the adventure are what keep them coming for more. Sometimes, in the middle of the run, when road conditions are bad, and they're hungry and tired, and nowhere near their destination, they think, "I want to go home." But the camaraderie and the fulfillment of the run is an experience that, they swear, cannot be bought.

When PACE member Glenn Enos takes his topless 1955 Porsche Spyder on a run, he wears a raincoat and zips it up when it rains and unzips it again when the rain stops. Admirably, no matter their sympathy in them, other PACE members stop and put down their convertible tops when there is a break in the rain.

One of their most memorable runs was to Siquijor, Bohol, where they brought their families, but sometimes, even their loved ones have a hard time appreciating their uncompromising passion for cars. Some chicks of a group from his number when she first saw him drive up their house in his Spyder. Tobe heard above the roar of the engine, she yelled incredulously, "Ulrich! Have you gone mad? You just bought a car with no roof!" Then when he had to jump out of the door-less car, she exclaimed in disbelief, "And no doors, too?! What's wrong with you?"

So, why the lure for vintage cars? Quite simply, vintage cars have more style than new cars. Limited by safety regulations in the automobile industry, almost all new cars look alike. Wood and metal add character to older cars, which have very little plastic.

According to Cobonpue, who owned the first vintage car in the group, a 1959 Fiat-Abarth convertible (one of the few in the Philippines), vintage cars make great investments, pieces since they always appreciate in value. The key to buying one is timing. Just like everything else in this world, vintage cars are commodities governed by the law of supply and demand, and you must know when to buy what.

The best things to look for in vintage cars are honesty, performance, rarity and historical significance or racing heritage. Honorary member Bobby Abonita—who promises to be an active member once he retires—is proud owner of a 1957 Corvette Roadster once owned by racing legend Dodjie Laurel. Ada's first racing car champion who was a two-time Marian Grand Prix winner. Just like a guitar once owned by Elvis, his car is sure weekend priceless.

The design aesthetic, although subjective, refers to the shape and the purity of lines—simple, clean and timeless. Cobonpue's Jaguar E-type Roadster is consistently listed as one of the most beautiful cars in the world, and is one of the few cars in the MoMA permanent collection.

Truly, beauty is best experienced, and not only viewed. That insight is what keeps the men behind PACE continuously cruising the roads with passion, dedication and fulfillment.

PACE members Tony Lozada, Jun-Jun Sy, Yong Lorenzana, Chris Tin, Darren Dean, Glenn Enos, Grant Benedicto, Kenneth Cobonpue, Jay Aldrigue, Michael Dalliber

'It's only you, the machine and the road.' You see people how they really are

ONE moonsight in Crossroads Mall, Banilad, Cebu

VINTAGE beauty amid historic architecture

EMERGING from the ferry in San Carlos City.

Do you need lifestyle coaching?

From page C1

promote emotional eating and laziness to move.

■ Teaching you how to be sensitive to avoiding high-calorie foods while at work or at parties and prepare you to manage high-risk situations especially during holidays.

Lifestyle coaching first became popular several eight to 10 years ago, whose protocol training services were combined with coaching sessions so fitness goals could be achieved.

Lifestyle/wellness coaching as a fitness trend rose from No. 20 in the 2008 list to No. 13 this year, according to the American College on Sports Medicine (ACSM) worldwide survey.

As lifestyle coach for four years now, I have seen various drastic behavioral and weight loss results from clients who learned behavioral strategies from terribly confining sessions. They were able to manage their weight and lifestyle even after they leave the fitness center. The best thing is that they're no longer clueless on how to deal with their problems since they are being prepared for it.

Knowledge and independence

Do you find it hard to continue your fitness and weight loss programs every time you stop going to the gym, due to the demands of job, family and other priorities?

Dependence on exercise equipment, say hip hop dance or 6 p.m., or taking the same exercise machines to the gym, might be a problem when your schedule changes. We easily stop your active lifestyle to such situations if you do not consider options outside the gym.

One of the best things you can get from coaching sessions is motivation that yields lasting changes. You can stay active for life by knowing what to do and how to do it correctly wherever you are.

Understand your issues

Did you ever wonder why all your strategies never ran to work even if you have the time and means to exercise and know proper eating?

Getting help from lifestyle coaching sessions will make you understand your real issues that come along with each lifestyle change attempt.

If there are issues bothering you, such as low self-esteem and being pessimistic, you will find it hard to achieve your goals. It's better to discuss these issues first, transform your negative thoughts into positive ones.

You must feel good about yourself and what you are doing before you can follow your exercise and eating programs.

E-mail the author at mostly-fit@gmail.com

Laser technology for healthier eyes

ONE OF THE PIONEERING eye centers in the country that corrects far- and near-sightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia with Nidek EC5000 Excimer Laser System is Advanced Vision Laser Center in Makati City.

Advanced Vision is not only equipped with top-of-the-line instruments and medicines and the latest software, it is also run by two Ophthalmologists: Dr. Edward Ty, D.E.B.O. and Dr. Rory Gay Go, E.B.B.O. Dr. Ty's expertise is on cornea and external disease while Dr. Go specializes in cataract and retinal disease. Both are also highly regarded refractive surgeons in the country.

Advanced Vision Laser Center corrects presbyopia using LASIK (Laser Assisted In-situ Keratomileusis) with Nidek Advanced Vision Excimer System EC5000 CE IR. This is specially patented by its European maker and the center has its own equipment and software called Presbyopic Customizable Cornea Treatment (PbC) to re-shape a blended Plana.

Dr. Go treats eye problems that are caused by or as complication of other diseases like diabetes or cancer. He said age-related macular degeneration (AMD) or loss of vision among adults is the most common that targets this condition.

The center also offers Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK), Epi-Lasik (Epi-K) for corneal scars, Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK) for low and moderate degrees of myopia and astigmatism and LASIK for all kinds of errors of refraction.

Advanced Vision Laser Center is at Suite 1804-1806 Medical Plaza Makati, Ayala cor. Dela Rosa Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Call 8443308, 843-2696, 8452714. E-mail jeddjelde@.net.

Halili Cruz School of Ballet performs classical, neoclassical and contemporary numbers in "A Dance Offering."

Halili Cruz School of Ballet in thanksgiving concert

THE HALILI CRUZ SCHOOL OF BALLET recently presented a three-hour thanksgiving season entitled "A Dance Offering" at the CCP Main Theater.

The recipient of Global Excellence Award's Most Outstanding Ballet School in Asia, the school presented classical, neoclassical and contemporary numbers such as Pas Open Ballet of La Bayadere Acts 2 & 3, Christmas Dances and Don Kipo and Gold.

Artistic director Shirley Halili Cruz expressed joy, gratitude and fulfillment in a heartwarming message.

Cruz was assisted in the program by her former students who are now full-time teachers in her ballet school: Grace Castillo Perez, Anna Bianca Bahinahin and Anna Katherine Bahinahin Cruz.

The Halili Cruz School of Ballet has received the following awards: Most Outstanding Ballet School in Asia, Most Outstanding Ballet in School in Asia Pacific, First Prize winner in Asia Pacific Dance Competition in Singapore, First prize winner in Dance Excellence in Los Angeles, California USA, First Prize winner in 21st Century International Arts Festival, Genting Highlands, Malaysia.

Quezon City Ballet, the Performing Company of the Halili Cruz School of Ballet awards won in 4Dw Awards—Best Dance Company, Classical Category, People's Choice—Most Outstanding Performing Group; Shirley Halili Cruz—HCSB and QCB Artistic Director awards; Global Dance Excellence award—Outstanding Dance Educator of Asia, awarded in Bangkok, Thailand; Presidential Recognition—Great Filipino Achiever in Arts and Culture, International Dance Award conferred in China, Dangal ng Lipi, Most Outstanding Balletboys in Boxing at Kalinga, QC Special Patronpil, Most Outstanding Citizen of Quezon City in Arts and Culture.

The main studio of Halili Cruz School of Ballet is at 1227 Quezon Ave., Quezon City. Call 3724607 or 4130804. It has branches at St. Pedro Poveda College, St. Mary's College, Ateneo College Tapisy, School of St. Anthony, Alabang Country Club and Miriam College.

What the end of the earth in 2012 means

ARMAGEDDON! APOCALYPSE! End times!

Those media conjure visions of calamities, cataclysms and upheavals. They induce fear and anxiety because they are believed to be the end of the world.

The great Mayan Calendar, which predicts the end of the present cycle as occur precisely at midnight of Dec. 21, 2012, suggests not the end of the world, but merely the end of a 26,000 year earth cycle, divided into five sub-cycles of about 5,300 years.

According to the Mayan Calendar we are on the last fifth earth cycle where a new beginning looms.

According to Mayan prophecies, "All visions, all years, all days, all events, reach their completion. Mentioned is the time in which we can know the benevolence of the sun. Mentioned is the time in which the sun's level is determined."

On Dec. 21, 2012, several heavenly planets will be in complete alignment with the earth and solar system, an event which takes place only once in about 26,000 years. Said such an alignment will exert a great magnetic pull that will affect all life on earth. Great changes will take place. There will be a breaking down of the old order of things to give way to the new.

In the words of Dr. James F. Fortals, president of the Academy for Future Science and author of the prophetic book "Seven Boundaries: The Keys of Enoch"—"Humanity must begin to understand that in a new era of true enlightenment, the exclusive material mind set will have to pass away in order for human nature to implement new methods of consciousness."

To help with this formidable transformation/evolution task, I wanted to consult Gabbey, an angelic entity that communicates each Dr. Jun Aquinino of Pangalinan, who teaches management. But before I could, Jun wanted to say he had received a message about the Mayan Prophecy from Gabbey.

According to the entity Gabbey, "The Mayan people had some contact with other beings in the universe who gave them knowledge about the heavenly bodies."

This explains how the Mayans were able to foretell accurately the movements of planets without the use of modern instruments. They were taught by beings who come from outer space.

End of an era

The end of the present Earth cycle on Dec. 21, 2012 mentioned in the Mayan Calendar "does not mean the end of the world but the end of a cycle or an era. This means that a new level of consciousness in the world will begin to take shape which will also affect the way of life on earth."

Gabbey said that everything in the universe is interconnected. "The phenomenon that will happen on Earth has a parallel event in another place in the universe. The change in your earth's consciousness will have an effect in the consciousness of others in beings in other planets."

Gabbey continued to explain that the new consciousness means "a better understanding of the meaning of life. Cultures on earth will gradually change based on a new understanding of life. New philosophies will emerge, religious beliefs will gradually fall and scientific inventions will proliferate, but this time, it would not be geared towards destruction but to improve human life."

He also said, "organizations, including religious organizations, will be shaken."

Gabbey predicted calamities to come, a prediction that echoes what is in the Mayan Calendar. But Gabbey added that these calamities would be brought about not only by the alignment of different planets but by other phenomena.

"Another far planet which has no name yet because it has not been discovered yet by your scientists will have a great effect on your sun, and this will trigger tremendous sun flares that will affect not only the earth but also the other planets in your solar system. This will cause diseases and other global calamities."

When asked what we can do about these coming changes and calamities, Gabbey replied, "Pray that you survive these calamities. Remember that this phenomenon is a natural occurrence in the higher order of things and, therefore, they will come. This is a part of the grand evolutionary scheme under the universal set-up by God. I will tell you later what is in store for the world once this era ends in 2012."

Then Gabbey abruptly ended the message by saying, "We are through."

Note: The next Basic ESP and Intuition Development seminar will be Jan. 17 and 18, 9 am-5 pm, and Confidence, Karma and Relationships seminar on Jan. 24, 1-7 p.m. Rm. 208 Philippine Plaza 2, Ayala St., Greenbelt, Makati. Call 8187245 or 8926806; Jun 8250000; e-mail junaquinio@yahoo.com.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licanco

Dec. 21, 2012 in the Mayan Calendar does not mean the end of the world but the end of a cycle or an era

Natural Energy Drink
Your food. NATURAL
Refined sugar-free
Preservative-free
Hypoallergenic
Antioxidant
Immune Booster
Energizer
Detoxifier
Digestive Aid
Laxative
Diuretic
Aphrodisiac
Tonic
Revitalizer
Lubricator
Skin Conditioner
Hair Conditioner
Anti-Aging
Anti-Cancer
Anti-Inflammatory
Anti-Bacterial
Anti-Viral
Anti-Fungal
Anti-Parasitic
Anti-Ulcer
Anti-Diabetic
Anti-Hypertensive
Anti-Hypotensive
Anti-Hypercholesterolemic
Anti-Hypocholesterolemic
Anti-Hyperglycemic
Anti-Hypoglycemic
Anti-Hyperuricemic
Anti-Hypouricemic
Anti-Hyperlipidemic
Anti-Hypolipidemic
Anti-Hyperthyroidism
Anti-Hypothyroidism
Anti-Hyperparathyroidism
Anti-Hypoparathyroidism
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Anti-Hypointercostal neurula
Anti-Hyperintercostal somite
Anti-Hypointercostal somite
Anti-Hyperintercostal notochord
Anti-Hypointercostal notochord
Anti-Hyperintercostal neural tube
Anti-Hypointercostal neural tube
Anti-Hyperintercostal neural crest
Anti-Hypointercostal neural crest
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Anti-Hypointercostal neural plate
Anti-Hyperintercostal neural groove
Anti-Hypointercostal neural groove
Anti-Hyperintercostal neural fold
Anti-Hypointercostal neural fold

GARFIELD

A. LIPIN

PUGAD BABOY

DICK TRACY

LOVEABOYS

JAMES BOND

DIVING CONNERY

BABY BLUES

KYOKO AND MISSY

TULSOK

KIKO MACHINE

BEN

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

	2			8			4	
3			9	6	2			8
		7	1		4	6		
4		9				1		3
		8	3		6	5		
9			8	7	5			1
	7			4			3	

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	3	4	5	7	8	6	9	2
8	6	2	9	3	1	4	5	7
9	5	7	6	4	2	3	1	8
3	4	1	2	8	7	9	6	5
6	7	5	4	9	3	2	8	1
2	8	9	1	6	5	7	4	3
4	1	6	8	5	9	3	7	6
5	9	3	7	2	6	8	1	4
7	2	8	3	1	4	5	2	9

Editor Bernie G. Yolardo

ENTERTAINMENT

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Journey, E-Heads live

PART 2 OF THE JOURNEY REUNION concerts, titled "The Final Act," will be held March 7 (venue to be announced later), while Journey with Pinoy frontman Arnel Pineda performs on March 14 at the Mall Open Field in Taguig.

SHOW TIME

Happy KC: Peace at last

'I ran to the TV monitor when I heard dad's voice'

By Rayan San Diego Jr.

KC CONCEPCION SAYS SHE was stunned that her mom, Sharon Cuneta, and stepfather, Sen. Francis Pangilinan, were "so cool" about Gabby Concepcion's videotaped greeting during Shawie's sweet birthday show.

She told Inquirer that night, "Peace at last." She said no one could ever know what the bad guys (me) went through before that moment of actual reconciliation.

Here she talks about their feelings at length, and also about her readiness for reconcilement as a young woman.

Exactly how did you feel when your dad Gabby greeted your mom?

I was hardscrape, getting ready for my dance number. Then I heard his voice—I ran to the nearest TV monitor.

I was surprised. As their daughter, I wanted [illegible] in my own little way to help in their power process. We had all gone through a lot as a family. I don't think people would ever understand all the emotions I went through. So that was fulfilling for me.

TAKE FIVE

I'm so happy that my mom also [illegible] This December Kiddy's moment with [illegible] and my sister Samantha Pepe has his own life now, and Mama has hers. I'm just so glad that everyone is cool about it. Three years, now life.

In a movie with the three of you it'll be impossible (Ouch)

I think so. There are a lot of people involved. They both have their own families. Out of respect, we don't want to rock the boat. But, as they say, nothing is impossible. I'll be free, whenever God wills.

Ally Pepa's video greeting was a gift from God. That is happened, and that my mom and Dad (like are cool about it... 'nerve' hindi ako D'nera nanood').

Performing daredevil stunts for her mom's annual birthday celebrations seems to have become a tradition for KC. Last year, she was suspended in midair in a harness. This year, she did a dance number on a see-saw.

Dinner teacher Gracelle Dupat of G Boys Dancers said KC was a "fast learner." But the

HAPPY BI

"All their daughter, I wanted [illegible] in the peace process," KC says.

Need Help?

- Relationship Problems
- Teenage Problems
- Depression/ Suicide
- Anxiety/ Panic Attacks
- Personality Problems
- Attitude Problems
- Low Self-Esteem
- Addiction/ Alcoholism
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Childhood Wounds
- Midlife Crisis
- Identity Crisis
- Stress/ Burnout
- Fears/ Worries
- Loneliness/ Grief
- Disturbing Thoughts
- Repetitive Behaviors
- Sleep Problems
- Eating Disorders
- Body Image Problems
- Homosexual Issues
- Sexual Difficulties
- Anger/ Violence
- Mood Swings
- Bipolar Disorder
- ADD/ ADHD
- Schizophrenia
- Other Life Problems

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Wish list for stars

VIEWFINDER

Nestor C. Torre

SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT NEW YEAR resolutions are made to be broken. We hope that the stars we cite here will do their best to screech the effectivity of their resolves—at least until Valentine's Day!

Aga Muhlach: Now that he's nearing [illegible]-40s, it's time for him to downscale his acting legacy and come up with a truly exceptional film performance that will make him a contender again in movie award derbies.

Angelica: Stop smiling—it can be dangerous to other people's feelings.

Aiza Seguerra: Inconsistent success is great, but don't overdo the thrill—your singing voice will be adversely affected. Also, you're only in your mid-teens, so easy on the eye makeup.

Nora Aunor: You must make a new movie in the Philippines in 2009, to remind everyone of your special acting gift.

Eugene Domingo: Stop telling others to eat, actually lose weight, okay?

Richard Gutierrez: Stop escaping roles beyond your key; play characters you can do best.

Marian Rivera: You come on too strong in defending yourself against detractors, soften your approach, or you'll end up as a villain in people's perception.

Anne Curtis: Don't be a victim of misreading, or your acting triumphs will be questioned.

Bb Pelotas: Learn that hosting a talk show requires more than just asking provocative questions and rattling the dishware in people's chests.

Traffic Guidelines: Take vocal placement lessons to add greater variety and liveliness to your rather monotonous speaking voice.

Phillip Salvador: In your dramatic performances, learn to distinguish between [illegible] and [illegible].

Eula Manzano: Host a new TV talk show... don't rehost you do best.

John Lloyd Cruz: Stop biting your lips to look cute. You're already "cute"; don't push it.

Sarah Geronimo: Take care of your singing voice; it's not good as it used to be, due to overuse. Also, if you're going to star in another romantic comedy, fall in love first, so your performance will be more believable.

Marisol Rodriguez: Relax. Don't come across as a freeze-dried diva.

Carmina Villaroel: After your successful TV series, try to star in a Filipino movie in 2009; to continue teaching young actresses how to act in natural and believable way.

Bada Mae Quinto: Steer clear of scenes, events and scandals—for a change. Otherwise, people will keep using you as a convenient target, even if you justifiably protest your innocence.

Nova Buenaventura: Triumph of "interesting" scenes and supporting roles. Convince an indie filmmaker to cast you as a lead that you can sink an [illegible] in your talents.

KARYLLE

CHANCE: Don't overdo the kiss.

MARIAN: Lose weight now.

RUFA: Take second placement lessons.

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SEN. LACSON'S SECRET TO LOOKING YOUNGER

Finally, he divulges his hair secret. Sen. Ping Lacson admits, "My secret is ReFirme™. No injections, no surgical facelift. Never. ReFirme™ erases my wrinkles, tightens my loose skin and firms up my saggy, 60 become my new 50! It's when I look and feel younger that life becomes limitless again. You welcome more possibilities, more challenges. I have accomplished a fair share of success, but I feel I've gotten my second wind."

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BEDTIME STORIES

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GALLERIA

1 TWILIGHT
2 TRANSPORTER 3
3 THE SPIRIT
4 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
5 BEDTIME STORIES
6 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
7 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
8 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL X
9 DESPERADAS 2
10 ISKUL BUKOL

ERMITA

1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 TRANSPORTER 3
3 THE SPIRIT
4 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
5 ISKUL BUKOL
6 DESPERADAS 2
7 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
8 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL X
9 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL / TWILIGHT

METRO EAST

1 ISKUL BUKOL
2 THE SPIRIT
3 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
4 TRANSPORTER 3
5 DESPERADAS 2
6 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
7 BEDTIME STORIES
8 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 8

NOVALICHES

1 ISKUL BUKOL
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
4 THE SPIRIT
5 TRANSPORTER 3
6 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT

PIONEER

1 THE SPIRIT
2 TRANSPORTER 3
3 BEDTIME STORIES
4 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON

STA. ROSA

1 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
4 ISKUL BUKOL
5 THE SPIRIT

LIPA

1 THE SPIRIT
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
4 DESPERADAS 2
5 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 8

DASMARINAS

1 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 8
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
4 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON

IMUS

1 ISKUL BUKOL
2 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
3 THE SPIRIT
4 TRANSPORTER 3
5 BEDTIME STORIES
6 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON

ANGELES

1 THE SPIRIT
2 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
3 ISKUL BUKOL
4 BEDTIME STORIES

STARMILLS

1 DESPERADAS 2
2 THE SPIRIT
3 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 8
4 BEDTIME STORIES
5 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
6 ISKUL BUKOL

BACOLOD

1 THE SPIRIT
2 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
3 BEDTIME STORIES
4 TWILIGHT
5 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL X
6 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

ILOILO

1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 ANG TANGING INA NYONG LAHAT
3 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
4 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL X
5 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
6 THE SPIRIT

Wish list for stars

From page D1

Christmas with Pia and Ryan

Last Dec. 24, as our family got together to celebrate Christmas Eve, we watched the TV channels in search of programs that would enhance our Yuletide spirit. EMTB had a Christmas concert, but it was our monthly chanting to be truly heartwarming. Still, to the absence of better and more reasonably appropriate entertainment fare, we made the televised concert our entertainment for the evening.

The following day we belatedly shrank. Yuletide gold. On "Showbiz," Pia Guanzon and Ryan Cayabyab let her guest, and them delighted viewers with snippets of his Christmas songs. Healthy fare was the heartwarming holiday show we were looking for and we thoroughly enjoyed the special program. So, obviously did Pia, who must have found it a welcome musical breather from her shows usual focus on—well, showbiz.

As the Christmas edition of "Showbiz" unfolded, Pia and Ryan got along famously as she asked the light questions that elicited the most insightful and personally revealing replies from Ryan.

The on-cam exchange between Pia and Ryan was so good, that we wished they could've had a weekly taped program set a more regular basis, like a new version of Ryan's defunct show, "Manila Jam." How about it, ABS-CBN?

POWER PLANT CINEMA

TRANSPORTER 3 - PG13
BEDTIME STORIES - GP
BEDTIME STORIES - GP
CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON - PG13
THE SPIRIT - PG13
CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON - PG13

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
TRANSPORTER 3
CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
BEDTIME STORIES
SPIRIT
687-6963

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
THEATRE MART
PROMENADE
WATCH SCRATCH & MATCH

SHANG CINEPLEX
1) BEDTIME STORIES 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50
2) BENJAMIN BUTTON 2:30, 6:00, 9:30
3) THE SPIRIT 2:10, 4:35, 7:00, 9:30
4) TRANSPORTER 3 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
5) BENJAMIN BUTTON 2:00, 3:30, 9:00
Shangri-La Plaza

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
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AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1
1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
3 SPIRIT
4 TRANSPORTER 3

GLORIETTA 4
1 SPIRIT
2 TRANSPORTER 3
3 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
4 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
5 BOOGIE WOOGIE
6 BEDTIME STORIES
7 ANG TANGING WAWING LAHAT

GREENBELT 1
1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON

GREENBELT 2
1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL X
4 SPIRIT
5 TRANSPORTER 3

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
3 SPIRIT
4 ANG TANGING WAWING LAHAT
5 TRANSPORTER 3

AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 TRANSPORTER 3
4 SPIRIT

MARKET! MARKET!
1 TRANSPORTER 3
2 ANG TANGING WAWING LAHAT
3 BEDTIME STORIES
4 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON
5 SPIRIT

TRINOMA
1 ANG TANGING WAWING LAHAT
2 MAKE, BUKOL
3 SPIRIT
4 TRANSPORTER 3
5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL X
6 BEDTIME STORIES
7 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON

AT THE MALLS

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Dingdong: I don't have to prove myself to anyone

By Marinel R. Cruz

"ALL THE ENTERTAINMENT things that happened in 2008 made me realize that I'm only human. This year, I have a chance to change and make things right again," said controversial actor Dingdong Dantes.

TAKE FIVE

The actor said he is aware of the negative public reaction to the way he handled his breakup with singer-actress Karylle, his girlfriend of three years. Things turned from bad to worse for Ding when the rumor that he had gotten another actress pregnant (Marian Rivera) circulated in December. The actress vehemently denied this.

"Others may not have agreed with (what I did). That's OK. What's important is that I did what I thought was right," he told Inquirer Entertainment on Friday during his launching as an endorser of Goldilocks Bakeshop.

Ding continued: "I just want to leave her (Karylle) alone. It's a new year. We should be talking about new things, new people."

It's been predicted that 2009 will not be good for love.

You make your own fate with God guiding you. Kahit lang yan, kahit ako pasok rin mangbalak.

Do you agree that the breakup helped increase Karylle's popularity?

I don't see it that way. You need talent to be recognized in this business. (She definitely has that. But I'm not informed about what's going on in her life lately. I prefer it that way.

People find it hard to believe that your relationship with Marian is purely professional.

I don't have to prove anything to anyone. If I'm asked about how Marian and I are, I answer as truthfully as I can. I respect the fact that people have speculations. Marian and I live according to how we think we should.

Is there no chance for you to become a couple?

Love is not on our priority list at this moment. We don't want our working relationship to get complicated. What's important is that we respect and trust each other.

How did you spend your holidays? Did you get to see Marian?

I was in Boracay with my siblings and cousins. Marian and I saw each other on December 24th. I went to see her in Cavite. We decided to spend the holidays with our respective families, hoang room for more love explosions sa buhay ko.

Didn't you miss her?

I did. We didn't see each other for five, more or less, five days. But we need to allot time for our families, too. Actually, more than missing her, I was eager to go back to working with her on our new teleserye, (Carlo J. Caparas' "Ang Babaeng Hinugot sa Tadyang" pertains to the "Adan at Eba" story.) I'm excited to work with her again. We're doing a romantic-comedy movie (with Judy Ann Santos) and a movie with Bea Alonzo (Shake, Rattle & Roll 12) under Star Cinema.

DINGDONG with Marian: "We just live according to how we think we should."

Are you ready for a new relationship?

I'm not sure if I am. I've decided not to look for "her." I know she's just around. I feel that she exists.

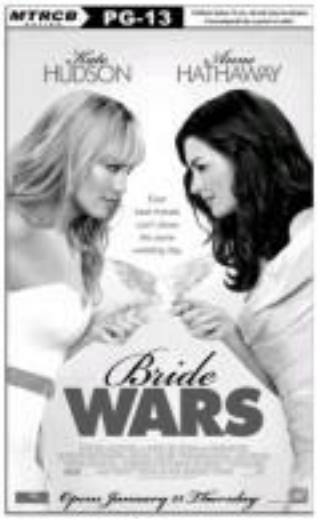
What's she like?

She's a true person inside and out, as sweet as a cookie&dots;dots cake.

What can you say about news linking Karylle to Christian Bautista and Jericho Rosales?

I'd rather not say anything. We have our separate lives now. I sincerely hope she will be happy.

E-mail mcruz@inquirer.com.ph



'That it happened, and that my mom and Dad Kiko are cool about it... wow! I was stunned'

KC with dad Gabby: "For me, his message was a gift from God."

Happy KC...

Turn to page B1

singer-actress insisted that joining Cirque de Soleil isn't her immediate goal.

Her current projects are her new stints with Richard Gutierrez, "When I Met U", her upcoming soap opera, "Lovers in Paris" with Piolo Pascual, and her job as National Ambassador against Hunger for the United Nations World Food Programme.

(Sir UN would allow us to meet former US President Bill Clinton for the Clinton Global Initiative forum held in Hong Kong last month.

What was it like, meeting former US President Clinton?

I was nervous being in the same room as people you only read about in The Economist (magazine). I was star-struck.

I also met Kenny's ambassador Jang Dong Kun, a famous actor in his country. He and I have committed to raise $4.2 million for seven Asian countries: Myanmar, East Timor, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Laos and Vietnam.

What was Clinton like?

Sincere, charming, passionate about his work. He's very concerned about climate change.

Your mom loves him.

Yes. I requested my UN contact to ask him to autograph three copies of his book, "Giving," for me, my mom and a friend (cinematographer Shayne Sarao).

You're doing "Lovers in Paris" with Piolo?

We'll be taping in Paris for 11 days. I'm very excited.

I first met Piolo when I was 18. We host-ed for a while when I went to college (in Paris). The next soap (based on a Rosemoor-ish) was a welcome surprise for both of us.

He used to visit me on the set [of my debut movie "For the Bible Tonight"] to convince me to do the show. It was as if he was courting me.

Piolo is your bet.

I have a feeling JE also be the location manager. When I watch movies [set in Paris], I recognize every corner.

What's it like to work with Chard again?

We're more relaxed and comfortable. We just shot our kissing scene in Subic. In our first movie, I was nervous. Now, we've nailed it na. It helped that we've traveled together. Now, we're like old friends.

Chard's mom (Annabelle Rama) wants you to end up with him?

Wow! I'm in a point in life when I'm meeting different guys... Chard will always be special. I learned a lot from him when we made our first movie.

Your mom thinks you're not the type to get married early.

Maybe I haven't found the right guy but I can say I'm ready to commit. I'm the type of person who values commitment, whether with friends or partners.